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Review and preview.

by

WALTER LAQUEUR AND OTHERS

FOR

OSD/NET ASSESSMENT

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THE PATTERN OF SOVIET CONDUCT IN THE THIRD WORLD:

Review and Preview

by

Walter Laqueur and others

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SOVIET INFLUENCE IN CONTEMPORARY IRAN

by

Muriel Atkin

The Soviet Union has had a greater opportunity to evolve a strategy for influencing affairs in Iran than in most of the countries of Asia. By the time the Bolsheviks took power, Russia had been actively involved in Iran's affairs for more than a century. Thus, for Lenin and his colleagues, Iran was not a remote and obscure place of as yet undemonstrated importance, the way it was for the United States before World War II. For Russian politicians of various ideologies, Iran was important as the object of a heated struggle for dominance between Russia and Britain. That perception has endured throughout the Soviet era, with the modification that the United States became an additional rival when a small American force joined in the Allied occupation of Iran in 1943 and then supplanted Britain as the chief adversary in the period between 1945 and 1953. Not only did the Soviet leadership inherit a concept of the significance of Iran to their interests, but they also had the benefit of learning from the example of tsarist techniques for manipulating Iranian affairs. A wide assortment of techniques, including military intervention, economic deals, intimidation and inducement through formal diplomatic channels, and the encouragement of forces hostile to the central government, produced occasional impressive gains as well as some setbacks. They were all part of the tsarist legacy which the Soviet Union has drawn upon and adopted in dealing with Iran.

As the Soviets experienced with various techniques aimed at producing a cooperative, perhaps even friendly government in Teheran they encountered several major setbacks and, until recently, at best modest gains. The most recent such failures occurred in 1952 and 1953 when Moscow and the Iranian Communists linked closely to it missed the opportunity to turn to their advantage the extremely volatile political situation touched off by the oil nationalization crisis and the conflict between nationalists and the monarchy. For the next decade, relations between the restored monarchy and the Kremlin were coolly correct, with Moscow reverting to the style of policy it had followed in the 1920s, emphasizing criticism of the Teheran government, demands, and intimidation, while Teheran banned the Communist party (the Tudeh) and was more closely tied than ever before to the West, especially the United States. The turning point in relations between the two countries came in the early 1960s when both deemed it in their interests to revert to the yet older tactic of using Russian involvement in Iran to balance that of the West. This shift in Soviet policy, from confrontation to conciliation, netted substantial advantage. While Iran hardly became the U.S.S.R.'s ally, it did downplay diplomatic confrontations, increase greatly the economic relations between the two countries (including welcome exports of natural gas to Transcaucasia and the establishment of a host of Soviet-sponsored development projects), and allow some exchanges of personnel, with Soviets coming to Iran as experts associated with the .pa

development projects and a small number of Iranians coming to the Soviet Union for technical training.

The Soviets have had experience, ever since they decided to make a costly peace with Imperial Germany soon after the Bolsheviks seized power, with differentiating between the ideal and the pragmatically acceptable in their foreign relations. Thus, while never abandoning the principle that Marxist socialism would ultimately come to Iran, the Soviets reconciled to what they came to view for the foreseeable future as the enlightened, progressive rule of Mohammed Reza Shah. This attitude persisted until the spring of 1978, when Moscow began to consider the possibility that the shah could not suppress his opponents as he had in the past. When Moscow realized that the revolutionaries were likely to win, and were virulently anti-American, it declared its support for them, although it was a bit confused at first about which the dominant faction was among them, and had to overcome a certain distaste when it realized that the most powerful element was the Islamic clergy.

The creation of a revolutionary regime in Iran has brought the Soviet Union the greatest opportunity in thirty years to expand its influence there. However, it has also brought an end to the quite satisfactory modus vivendi which the Soviets had evolved with Mohammad Reza Shah. The Soviets traditionally have preferred dealing with rulers who fit certain familiar categories, such as the modernizing-nationalist-anti-Communist-strongman to which the shah (as well as Gamal Nasser and Muammar Gaddafi) belonged, than people who are unfamiliar, unpredictable, and whose ability to retain power in the context of a heated

rivalry remains unclear. Thus, while the Soviets are aware that Iran's post-1979 political turmoil raises at least the possibility that a pro-Soviet government might be installed at some time in the future, the more immediate concern is to secure an accommodation similar to the one that existed with the shah. Towards that end, the Kremlin is using the latest version of the tactics Russia began to use in Iran in the nineteenth century. These fall into two broad categories. The first is official relations between states, including diplomacy, economic agreements, cultural exchanges and other formal contacts between the two countries. The second category comprises unofficial contacts, such as propaganda, the activities of the Tudeh Party, relations with other parties, attempts to build a following among minorities at odds with the central government, and clandestine activities.

Diplomatic Relations

The Soviet Union has repeatedly declared its support for the revolutionary regime in Iran even though it criticizes individuals and political groups associated with the government. The two terms most frequently used in Soviet sources to characterize the revolution, "anti-imperialist" and "democratic," provide a key to the basis for this policy. The term "anti-imperialist" means that Iran's foreign policy parallels some of the Soviet Union's likes and dislikes. The animosity towards the United States is the most important element from Moscow's perspective (and Teheran's) but Iran has also broken relations with Israel and South Africa and withdrawn from

the moribund CENTRO. At the same time the new regime has improved relations with Syria, Libya, South Yemen, North Korea, and Cuba, and has also joined the Non-aligned Movement (currently led by Cuba). Teheran maintains diplomatic relations with the Soviet bloc states of Eastern Europe, but this is a continuation of the shah's policy, not a recent innovation. "Democratic" is used to mean three things: that the revolution and Ayatollah Khomeini have broad public support, that the revolutionaries favor extensive social and economic reforms designed to expand the public sector of the economy and improve the standard of living of workers and peasants; and that the new rulers have allowed the Tudeh Party to operate legally, in sharp contrast to the generation of vigorous repression directed against the Tudeh by the shah.

The most important way in which the Soviet Union has tried to use diplomacy to influence the new regime in Teheran is its backing for the revolutionaries in their confrontations with the United States. This began with a declaration by Brezhnev on November 19, 1978 that any foreign intervention in Iran would be intolerable to the Soviet Union because it would pose a threat to Soviet security.¹ This stance was elaborated as the United States sought ways to respond to the disastrous turn in relations with Iran and to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The expanded formula was dubbed the Brezhnev doctrine of December 1980. The Soviet leader argued that there should be no intervention in the affairs of Persian Gulf states by countries outside the region, that such extra-regional powers have no

military facilities in the Gulf. that there be no interference with the navigation of the Gulf or the regional powers' disposition of their natural resources.² The Soviets have asserted that it is Brezhnev's strong stand against foreign interference in Iran's affairs which has deterred the United States from launching its allegedly numerous counterrevolutionary plans against the new regime.³

The Soviets demonstrated their diplomatic support for the revolutionary government in Teheran by endorsing the seizure of the U.S. embassy and the holding of its staff as hostages. From the start, the Soviets argued that these actions did not violate international law and that the guilty party was the United States, which was alleged to be engaged in many anti-Iranian activities. When the United States brought the matter before the United Nations, the Soviets rejected the American arguments and refused to endorse a trade boycott of Iran. While Moscow openly welcomed the embassy seizure because it undercut the possibility of repairing U.S.-Iranian relations in the foreseeable future,⁴ there are some hints that they were concerned at first that the affair might backfire. The Soviets expressed concern that this issue was distracting the Teheran government from what should have been the highest priorities of the revolution (including resolving the dispute with the Kurds).⁵ However, the Soviets eventually put aside their qualms. They still saw their best option as supporting the Khomeini line, and he had endorsed the takeover of the embassy. The risk of an escalation of the confrontation was reduced by the nature of the American response. Thus the Soviets had little choice but to support the embassy

occupation unequivocally unless they were willing to risk losing influence in Iran and had reason to expect that the cost of such a policy would not be dangerously high.

Moscow continues to try to use the Babrak Karmal government, which it is keeping in power in Afghanistan, to increase the diplomatic ties between Iran and the Soviet bloc. The Soviets have repeatedly urged Teheran to accept Karmal's offer of good neighborly relations and anti-imperialist cooperation⁶ but Teheran remains scathingly critical of the Communist regime in Afghanistan and the Soviet military presence there.

The war between Iran and Iraq, which began in September 1980, has been a source of acute embarrassment to the Kremlin, which wants good relations with both countries. The Soviet official position is that this war is "fratricidal" and serves the interest of imperialism, not the two combatants.⁷ Moscow has declared itself neutral in the conflict and has tried to balance friendly postures to the two countries. Press coverage contains reports from Iraqi and Iranian sources. When dealing with Arabs, the Soviets refer to the Arab Gulf; when dealing with Iranians, they call it the Persian Gulf. Moscow notes its years of cooperation with Iraq while wooing the Iranian ambassador. It is presumed to have given military aid to Iraq, though it denies this to the Iranians. Western reports indicate that Moscow has also sent military equipment to Iran. Though Teheran has denied this indignantly, President 'Ali Khamene'i recently came close to confirming it when he said that Iran would never accept Soviet military aid because that would involve the presence of Soviet

military personnel in Iran, but that in time of war Iran could not deny itself the option of buying material from the Soviets.⁸ The Soviets argue that the only appropriate way to resolve the dispute between Iran and Iraq is by negotiating and have voiced regret that Iran's demands are as far reaching and unyielding. Nonetheless, Moscow has been unwilling to risk the deterioration of its relations with Teheran which would likely result from any indication of preference for the Iraqi side. The reverses suffered by Iraq in the spring of 1962 make such a move by the Soviets even less likely.

The only time when the Soviet Union was willing to show less than full support for the revolutionary government in Teheran was in the second half of 1979 until the seizure of the American Embassy in November. The problem, from the Soviet point of view, was that the provisional government, led by Mehdi Bazarpani, was comparatively moderate on domestic issues and not particularly anti-American. By these criteria the Islamic Republican Party, which was anti-Bazarpani and some of those in his cabinet, have links to the political tradition of Mohammad Mosaddeq, prime minister during the oil nationalization crisis of the early 1950s. At that time, the Soviet Union was cool to Mosaddeq for being too willing to deal with the United States. After Mosaddeq's fall, Moscow decided this was a critical mistake and during the current political turmoil indignantly rejects the charge, levelled by Abdolhasan Bani Sadr and others, that it had failed to support Mosaddeq.⁹ In addition, when the Soviets realized that the revolutionary movement constituted a serious threat to the shah, they assumed, until comparatively late, that

was led by the secular nationalists of the Mosaddeq tradition.
not the politicized mullahs.¹⁰ The most important way Soviet
coolness towards the Bazarqan government was displayed was in
increased support for the Kurds' grievances against the central
government.¹¹ Yet they did not burn their bridges to Bazarqan
until he had already been forced from office as a consequence of
the takeover of the American embassy. From the Soviet point of
view, this was yet another beneficial result of the seizure of
the embassy.¹²

The existence of Soviet-Iranian diplomatic relations permits
the Soviet Union to maintain embassy and consular personnel in
Iran. Iranian officials expressed some suspicion of the
activities of consular staff in the Caspian coastal city of
Rasht. They ordered the consulate closed in retaliation for the
Soviets' refusal to allow Iran to open a consulate in the capital
of the predominantly Muslim Tajik S.S.R. (The Soviets still have
a consulate in Esfahan). In reaction to the invasion of
Afghanistan, Teheran required the Soviets to reduce the size of
its embassy staff in Teheran.¹³

The Soviet Union's diplomatic tactics toward Iran have
brought very modest gains. Anti-Americanism is certainly a
powerful force, but this was internally generated, not the
product of Soviet efforts. After all, the Soviet Union
maintained good relations with the Shah as late as the first half
of 1978 despite his close diplomatic, economic, and military ties
with the United States. Nonetheless, this is the brightest
diplomatic development from the Soviet perspective and is

important enough to outweigh the Soviets' grounds for displeasure over other aspects of Iran's foreign policy.

The political leadership of revolutionary Iran is not a homogeneous body. Those who have held government office belong to a variety of factions, many of them mutually hostile, as the careers of Bani-Sadr, Bazargan, and Sadeq Ghotbzadeh show. Even within the Islamic Republican Party and the Islamic clergy there are different orientations. In light of this, it is not surprising that the attitude toward the Soviet Union also varies. If anything, Bani-Sadr and Ghotbzadeh were more overtly critical of the Soviets than some of the powerful mullahs, especially in late 1979 and early 1980. While other mullahs regard everyone left of center as a Communist and are very anti-Soviet. Still, if one considers the people at the apex of power in the central government, certain overall trends are discernable.

While most Americans or Soviets may see the central issue in international relations as the rivalry between their two countries, this is not the central issue for many Iranian politicians. For them, the central issue is to promote the interests of Iran (or their own party, or themselves). The American-Soviet rivalry may be useful towards that end, but any benefit derived by either superpower is secondary to the benefit derived by Iran, not the reverse. Thus many Iranian politicians believe that the Soviet Union owed Iran support because of its anti-Americanism and therefore deserves no special gratitude. Even Mohammad Mokhebbat, the new regime's ambassador to Moscow and a leading proponent of close Iranian-Soviet relations, has said, "We are engaged in a struggle against the U.S. government, and

the Soviet Union has no alternative but to support our
struggle..."¹⁴

Bani Sadr, though not particularly well disposed towards the
Soviet Union, shared this attitude.¹⁵ The mood among Khomeini,
the Islamic Republicans, and others is that the revolution has
made Iran a strong, independent state not subject to the
domination of any foreign power. They insist that the
elimination of American influence in Iran does not mean that the
Soviet Union can take its place.¹⁶

The high point for Soviet prestige in Iran came in late 1979
and early 1980 because of Soviet diplomatic support for Iran on
the hostage crisis.¹⁷ Yet this situation deteriorated rapidly
from the end of December 1979 because of the Soviet invasion of
Afghanistan, which has consistently been denounced in scathing
terms by Iran's leaders.¹⁸ The outbreak of war with Iraq has
increased Iran's dissatisfaction with Soviet policy. Soviet
neutrality was deemed inadequate the Soviet arms deliveries to
Iraq particularly offensive.¹⁹ Even though Iran may well have
obtained weapons from the Soviet Union, this does not of itself
betoken a qualitative change in relations between the two. The
shah also bought some military hardware from the Soviet Union
without being pro-Soviet. The emergency created by the war with
Iraq has forced Iran to buy arms wherever it can. It has had
arms dealers in western Europe looking for arms deals and has
obtained some U.S. made spare parts from the Israelis while still
supporting the PLO diplomatically against Israel.²⁰

Iranian diplomatic rhetoric contains many references to the "superpowers" meaning the United States and the Soviet Union, a comparison the Soviets find invidious. The superpowers are accused of having a common ambition which outweighs their differences: the desire to dominate the world by dividing it into two shares. Thus Teheran argues that the Soviet Union endorses America's anti-Iranian activities.

One telling indication of Iranian mistrust of Soviet intentions is Teheran's unilateral abrogation in November 1979 of two articles of the 1921 treaty between the two governments. These provisions allowed Soviet military intervention in Iran when a third party based there posed a threat to Soviet security which the Iranians themselves could not eliminate. This was the basis on which the Soviet Union justified military intervention in Iran during World War II and threatened it on other occasions, including, by implication, in the Brezhnev pronouncement on Iran in November 1978. Iran's new leaders objected to these provisions not only because the treaty was associated with "the debased regime of the past" but also because, as they accurately observed, the provisions were intended to have narrow applications, referring only to White forces which had fled to Iran as the tide of the Russian civil war turned against them. Although the decision to repudiate these provisions was made by the Bazarjan government, his successors have stood by that decision. (Moscow does not recognize this action.)

Although revolutionary Iran has improved or established relations with a number of countries which are close to the Soviets, it has also improved its relations with Turkey and

Pakistan with which the Soviets are on poor terms. The Iran-Pakistan rapprochement is a dramatic reversal stimulated by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Relations with China remain correct, as under the shah, despite Moscow's open displeasure.

Economic Agreements

Since tsarist times, Russia's rulers have regarded economic relations in Iran as the continuation of diplomacy by other means. This principle was recognized by Lenin and has remained an element of the Soviet approach. Both countries are now quite willing to pursue economic arrangements with each other regardless of the problems in their diplomatic relations. Most of this involved the completion or expansion of agreements which were made in the shah's time for such things as dams, powerplants, machinery, silos, and most prominently, the Esfahan steel mill. There are also commercial agreements with most of the East European countries, as there had been under the shah. Soviet-Iranian trade was not insignificant before the revolution and has increased rapidly since, exceeding a value of \$1 billion by 1981.²³ In 1980, the two countries made a transit trade agreement modeled on one concluded during the monarchy in 1957. This trade too, has increased since the revolution. The electrification of the railway linking Iran's principal northwestern city, Tabriz, and the Soviet Transcaucasian border was completed at the start of 1982 with Moscow promising to send Iran ten locomotives to use on that line.²⁴ This route certainly has the potential to be major aid to increased Soviet-Iranian

communications, especially since Iran's port facilities on the Caspian (and elsewhere) are quite limited.

Whether the extensive economic links between the two countries have in fact increased Soviet influence in Iran remains questionable. Qualitatively, very little has changed since the days of the monarchy. An opportunity exists for the Soviets to increase Iran's need for their cooperation, especially since some of Pahlavi Iran's important economic partners, especially the United States as well as France are now politically unacceptable and some other countries, notably Japan, seem reluctant to invest in an economy where inflation and labor unrest are so high and productivity so low. In the 1920s, when northern Iran traded extensively with the Soviet Union, the Soviets occasionally stopped trade between the two countries as a way of applying political pressure on the Teheran government. Yet this probably did the Soviets more harm than good, encouraging Iranian efforts to promote economic self-reliance and in general intensifying anti-Soviet feeling. The Soviets now contend that their trade and transit trade has been essential in helping Iran minimize the damage done by the American boycott initiated in response to the embassy seizure. Some Iranian officials agree but put more emphasis on Iran's ability to defy a superpower than on gratitude toward the Soviet Union.²⁵ Iran trades with a variety of other countries, including West Germany, Turkey, China, many other Asian and African states, while Iran's trade via the Soviet Union with other countries (including West Germany and Japan) has increased since the revolution (300 percent according to Soviet figures) as of spring 1981 more of Iran's foreign trade still

went through the southern ports.²⁶ Given the poor state of the Iranian economy, including an estimated drop of one-third or more in industrial production, it is possible that some Soviet-backed enterprises in Iran are not functioning.²⁷

The economic and trade agreements provide for a number of Soviet (and East European) citizens to work in Iran as technical experts and cargo expeditors. As a very tentative estimate,²⁸ there may be somewhat more than 2,000 such people there. They have the opportunity to influence Iranians with whom they come in contact or to engage in activities not related to their public mission in Iran. There are some hints that they may have had some success at this in the northern port city of Rasht but in the central city of Esfahan, where the largest number is concentrated, their efforts do not seem to have produced any spectacular results, though there is probably a certain amount of support among workers in the Soviet-backed plants. As under the shah, Iran has agreements to send people to the Soviet Union for technical training. The Soviets claim that more than a thousand Iranians have already received technical training in the Soviet Union.²⁹ The overwhelming majority of these people did so before the revolution.

In one economic area, the Soviet Union has suffered a major setback since the fall of the shah. Under the monarchy, Iran exported natural gas to the Soviet Union through a pipeline connecting the source of the gas in southwestern Iran with the Soviet Transcaucasian border and there was a project to construct a second pipeline. The new regime soon cancelled that

construction project and demanded a higher price for the gas already being delivered. The Iranians argued that the existing price was far below the world market level and began negotiations for a price increase of roughly 500 percent. By March 1980, with the Soviets' best offer still about a third below the Iranian's demand, Iran cancelled all gas sales via the pipeline.³⁰ (However, it does sell the Soviets and Eastern Europeans oil.) The end of gas sales and the talk of building a pipeline through Iran and Turkey announced in the spring of 1982 are at least as important politically as they are economically a gesture of Iran's independence from the Soviets. While the Soviets would have preferred that Iran follow a different natural gas policy, this setback has not upset them to the point that they ceased pursuing other economic agreements with Iran or broke off existing ones. (The Iranians have also shut down a number of Soviet economic operations within their country, including a bank, an insurance company, and the branch in Iran of the transportation agency.)³¹

Travel Between Iran and the Soviet Union

Moscow has tried to continue the practice begun under the monarchy of cultural exchanges and visits of specialized delegations between Iran and the Soviet Union as a way of encouraging a favorable attitude towards the Soviet Union. Some of these exchanges, like concert tours by the Moscow State Symphony in 1978, are now impossible because of the mullians' hostility towards Western culture. The Islamic Republic has also signaled its lack of enthusiasm for cultural exchanges with its

northern neighbor by abolishing in 1962 the Iranian Society for Cultural Links with the U.S.S.R., founded during the Soviet occupation of northern Iran during World War II.³² Soviet Muslim clerics have invited their Iranian counterparts to visit and have themselves sought to visit Iran, although since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan Iran's response has been negative and the Soviet attitude toward Islam condemned.³³ Secular Iranian government officials have visited the Soviet Union to get information about areas of Soviet technical expertise and meet Soviet Muslims. However, in at least one case in 1981, such a visitor brought back a very negative report of the status of Soviet Muslims which was then broadcast in Iran.³⁴ A small number of Iranian students have attended Soviet schools.³⁵

Propaganda

The Soviet Union maintains a vigorous propaganda campaign directed at Iran, primarily by means of broadcasts by regular Soviet radio stations in Moscow and Baku (the capital of Soviet Azerbaijan). The former broadcasts to Iran in Persian, the latter in Azeri Turkish, spoken by millions of inhabitants of northern Iran. Much of the propaganda is devoted to lauding Soviet policy towards Iran since the days of Lenin. The Soviet Union portrays itself a consistent friend of Iranian national interests and the best friend of the Iranian revolution. In the process it does some interesting revising of history. For example, the Soviet occupation of northern Iran during World War II is explained as saving Iran from the fascist menace, including

German plans to make northern Iran its colony. The Soviets also claim to have been stalwart supporters of Mosaddeq, and seek to give the impression that they were on poor terms with Mohammad Reza Shah. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan is justified as internal Afghan matter, the legitimate government of the country having asked for Soviet aid in dealing with a counterrevolution backed by the United States and other imperialists and reactionaries. The Karmal regime there is depicted as popular, anti-imperialistic, and respectful of Islam, thus giving it much in common with Iran.

Next to the exaltation of Soviet benevolence towards Iran, the most important theme of Soviet propaganda is the ceaseless American threat to the survival of the Iranian revolution. There is a steady stream of stories about American military preparations for an attack on Iran and other efforts to foment counterrevolution. An analogy is often drawn between alleged American activities now and at the time of Mosaddeq's overthrow in 1953. Every American move during the hostage crisis was interpreted in this light. As the end of the crisis neared, the Soviets tried to discredit Washington's terms for a settlement. According to Soviet broadcasts, the crisis was merely used as a rationale for America's existing intervention plans. Therefore, the hostages' release has not reduced the American menace. Israel and China are also subject to denunciation as part of the American-led imperialist conspiracy against Iran.

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This extensive propaganda campaign does not seem to have produced any significant change of attitude among Iran's current leaders, who became extremely anti-American and anti-Israel for

reasons having to do with their variety of Iranian nationalism, not Soviet broadcasts. For all the Soviets' efforts, Iran's leaders remain hostile to the Karmal regime and the Soviet presence in Afghanistan while refusing to become hostile towards China. Soviet radio propaganda also contains criticism of various secular revolutionary figures, especially those who are not sufficiently anti-Western or who have fallen afoul of the Islamic Republican Party, as well as competing leftist groups. However, the heated power struggle within Iran reflects internal political traditions, not the influence of Soviet propaganda. While the Soviet attitude towards Kari Saor has been sometimes critical, sometimes positive, by the time the Islamic Republicans drove him from power, Moscow considered him the lesser evil but had to reconcile itself to a chance it could not control.³⁷

Ayatollah Khomeini is never criticized in Soviet propaganda broadcasts. To do otherwise would be counter productive, since the Soviets consider him the one overwhelmingly prestigious figure in post-Pahlavi Iran.³⁸ Some of those close to Khomeini and in the Islamic Republic Party are occasionally criticized, usually not by name but in general terms as people who are not really following Khomeini's intentions.³⁹ Yet that is really a way of criticizing elements of current Iranian policy which Khomeini endorses without attacking him or appearing hostile to the current government in Teheran. Therefore, it is unlikely to have much influence with the regime or its supporters.

The Tudeh Party

The Tudeh Party is Iran's pro-Soviet Communist party. (There are other, small Communist parties in Iran, with a Trotskyist, Maoist, or some other non-Soviet orientation.) As the Tudeh itself says, it "has the most close and fraternal ties with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union..."⁴⁰ That is one of Tudeh's biggest problems, since most non-Tudeh members in Iran see it as a tool of the Soviets, not as a party which puts Iran's interests first. The last time the Tudeh was a powerful force in Iranian politics was in the Mosaddeq era, when it was by far the largest and best organized party. Between that time and the revolution, it was in eclipse, with the shah's government waging a fierce campaign of repression against it, the party leaders in exile in Eastern Europe, and many members of its traditional constituency (intellectuals, students, and workers) no longer interested in its message.

The active opposition to the shah in 1978 did not include extensive or influential participation by the Tudeh, although the party did join the revolution once it was well underway. Given the demonstrable strength of the religious-political movement, and the determination, particularly on Moscow's part, not to repeat the mistakes of the Mosaddeq era, the Tudeh declared its support for Ayatollah Khomeini as the monarchy neared collapse. This has been the keystone of the Tudeh's public policy ever since. Khomeini is never criticized and is often cited in the Tudeh's clandestine radio broadcasts to justify the Tudeh's own demands.⁴¹ The Tudeh also supports the Islamic Republican Party, formed after the revolution, although

it is frequently critical of that group. Thus, in the 1980 presidential election, the party did not even attempt to run a candidate of its own, nor did it support Bani Sadr, a secular reformer who has been influenced by socialist thought. Instead, it supported Hasan Habibi, who was close to some prominent clerics and finished a weak third in the elections. The Tudeh sided with the IRP against Bani Sadr in the power struggle that drove the president from office in 1981.⁴²

Yet the Tudeh's relations to Khomeini and the IRP remains an uneasy one. As a Tudeh spokesman conceded, expressions of good will have been fairly one-sided in this arrangement.⁴³ The Islamic Republicans have allowed the Tudeh to exist as a legal party and have not tried to destroy it, as they have tried with various guerrilla organizations. However, the elements which dominate the IRP are not allowing the Tudeh to do more than exist, not allowing it to contend for a share of political power. The Tudeh has been subject to various forms of harassment by IRP members and Islamic fundamentalists (the Hezbollahis); government officials have not come to the aid of the Tudeh when it was attacked. Its offices have occasionally been ransacked and occupied, the main party paper (Mardom) banned, party members abused, and some of its candidates barred from running for office.⁴⁴ The Tudeh's frequent complaints about the IRP's desire for a monopoly of political power, the "fanaticism" of some of its members, and its belief that the difference between religious and non-religious political elements is more important than their shared support for the Iranian revolution, all reflect the

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Tudeh's sense of weakness and frustration. Yet the Tudeh has not broken with the IRP and has little alternative but to support it because it is the one party with power.

As part of the strategy of bolstering its position by cooperating with larger political parties, the Tudeh has also sought alliances with other leftist groups. Many of these have a low opinion of the Tudeh because its leaders spent a generation in exile, far from Iranian realities; because it was critical of the guerrilla methods of its rivals on the left and generally opposed violent confrontation with the monarchy in the 1970s; because it is seen as a Soviet puppet; and because its support of Khomeini and the IRP appeared hypocritical and ideologically

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unsound. Initially, the Tudeh wooed the Mojahedin-e Khalq, which offered the attraction of being comparatively large and combining elements of Islamic thought with socialist influence. However, the Mojahedin were not interested and remained hostile to the IRP and the central government, which put it in conflict with the key element of Tudeh strategy. Having failed to reach an accommodation with the Mojahedin, the Tudeh sought alliance with the Fedayan-e Khalq, a secular, avowedly Marxist-Leninist guerrilla organization, whose members were formerly dubbed

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"infantile leftists" by the Tudeh. A coalition has been achieved with the self-styled "Majority" faction of the Fedayan. As this name implies, the Fedayan are split. They have been further weakened by declining popularity and government harassment. Thus, it is unlikely that the Tudeh's success in finding an ally has materially strengthened its position.

The main themes of the Tudeh's platform since the revolution have the underlying common purpose of eliminating the party's political rivals. Thus it calls frequently for a purge of the administration, revolutionary committee, and the military to eliminate holdovers from the days of the monarchy and counterrevolutionary agents. These terms are used to mean any one the party does not like: the significance of removing such people from such powerful institutions is obvious. The fact that the Tudeh continues to advocate these purges and complain that they have not been made reflects the strength of anti-Tudeh personnel in position of power. The other main area of reform endorsed by the Tudeh involved economic measures designed to better the lot of the workers and peasants while breaking the power of their exploiters: large landowners, big businessmen, and wealthy bazaar merchants. All these groups are identified by the Tudeh as enemies of the revolution, whose power must be broken to end political subversion.⁴⁹ The Tudeh generally credits the IRP with having good intentions in these matters but faults them for failing to take sufficient action. A land reform law has been on the books since the spring of 1960 but has not been put into effect. Some businesses have been nationalized, which meets with Tudeh approval, but often it is mullahs who are appointed to manage them, not pro-Tudeh technocrats, as the party had hoped. In any case, many businesses, public or private, are doing very poorly in the generally beleaguered Iranian economy. The party's hostility towards the leading bazaar merchants reflects the IRP's own attempt to use them as the scapegoat for Iran's high inflation rate (estimated to run about 60-70 percent annually).

This may be a politically dangerous move in that the wealthier bazaaris, and some others, who apparently are antagonized by this policy, have in the past been particularly important supporters of the mullahs in political as well as religious matters. 50

Tuden is engaged in extensive propaganda efforts through a wide variety of serial publications in Persian and Azeri Turkish, tape recordings, and radio broadcasts in both languages on the clandestine station, National Voice of Iran, which transmits from Soviet Azerbaijan. The National Voice of Iran does not acknowledge any link to the Tuden or the Soviet Union but portrays itself as representing Iranian patriots who are loyal to the revolution, Islam, and Khomeini. The message Tuden seeks to communicate by these means included lengthy defense of all Soviet actions, advocacy of the same arguments as the Soviets make to Iran, including the American menace, and advocacy of the Tuden's domestic program. 51

The Tuden also serves as a means of encouraging a pro-Soviet attitude among the two largest minorities, the Azerbaijanis and the Kurds. While the party has some supporters among both groups, in neither case is its position strong. Despite the many rumors circulating about extensive Tuden penetration of Iran's ruling circles, its current position is in fact quite weak. Many of these stories come from anti-leftist religious-political figures within Iran and from anti-government emigre groups, who are all engaged in a furious power struggle in which polemics are more important than judicious reporting. Many of the charges are put in general terms, which makes them hard to verify. There are

often problems with specific charges. For example, one of the people accused by his enemies of being subject to Tudeh influence is Banzad Nabavi, the minister of economic affairs. Yet Nabavi has also criticized the Soviet Union, using the standard rhetoric about the "superpowers" for which he has been attacked by the Soviets.⁵²

The Tudeh was probably at its most influential in late 1979 and early 1980. Tudeh statements were reported at length and without editorializing by newspapers not affiliated with it, including government controlled papers, as well as the state radio.⁵³

One small indication of the influence of Tudeh propaganda in this period is the way Tenehan radio, which ordinarily gives little attention to Latin American affairs, discussed the overthrow of Chile's Salvador Allende in connection with American attempts to destabilize anti-imperialist regimes two days after the National Voice of Iran raised the same issue⁵⁴

in one of its broadcasts. The Tudeh claimed to have influence among some of the people close to Khomeini and some state officials acknowledged being Tudeh members.⁵⁵

Whether these reports were exaggerated or the Tudeh's fortunes declined because of later developments, the party looks to be in an unenviable position. If it had many supporters in the state radio, as alleged, they have not been able to prevent blistering criticism of the Soviet Union over the invasion of Afghanistan as well as other issues. It did badly in the Majles (parliament) elections of 1980. If the elections were rigged, this still shows that the party did not have enough friends in ruling circles to enable it to share in the benefits of the rigging. In the spring of 1982,

the government launched a purge of the state administration and the educational system. moves which the Tudeh finds threatening. Well before this, the government shut down the universities, depriving the Tudeh of one of its most important areas for recruiting. The party complains about how misguided young people and workers are (i.e., not subject to its influence) and about the extent to which the masses continue to follow the leadership of the mullahs. 56 The alliance with the IRP has put the Tudeh in an awkward position. It has little to offer the secular nationalists who are dissatisfied with the IRP but, with its reputation as atheist and Communist, has little to offer those to whom Islam is important. The only line on which it does not face strong competition from other parties is complete support for the Soviet Union, including over the invasion of Afghanistan. There is a small audience for such an appeal.

Minorities

The Soviets (and the British) have in the past used some of Iran's ethnic minorities to pressure the central government and provide local enclaves of influence. Since 1979, Moscow has again been actively pursuing influence among the two largest ethnic minorities, the Kurds (perhaps 5 million in Iran) and the Azerbaijani Turks (perhaps 10 million in Iran). However, this time its policy is more ambivalent than it was in 1945 and 1946 when Moscow openly supported autonomist movements among both peoples. The main complication now is that Moscow is also pursuing good relations with the central government and feels it

has made at least some progress. In the past, the minorities were used because Moscow's relations with the central government were poor. The general Soviet position on Iran's minorities since the revolution is that they have legitimate rights to their own cultural expression and to a share in the benefits of the new order. However, this line is not directed against the central government. Rather, it is argued that the minorities' problems were caused by the shah's repression. Therefore, the installation of the new regime in Teheran marks an end to the oppressive policies. Khomeini is portrayed as sensitive to the minorities' grievances and desirous of resolving them. The Soviets fault the central government for not doing enough for the minorities but continue to express the hope that it will see the wisdom of conciliation. The crux of the Soviet argument is that whatever hurts the central government aids the cause of the counterrevolution and imperialism, and that is against the interests of all Iran's inhabitants, whether Persian or minority.⁵⁸

The Soviets seem to have little influence among some strategically located minorities, including the Turkmens in the northeast, the Baluchis in the southeast, and the Araos in the southwest. Members of these groups have engaged in clashes with central authorities but the Soviet characterizations of these incidents is extremely negative. The leaders of these activities are described as the local reactionary elite, agents of imperialism, and, in the case of the Baluchis, Afghan drug smugglers.⁵⁹ It is unlikely that this rhetoric is intended to conceal Soviet involvement among these peoples, since the tone is

so very hostile and since the Soviets did not use such language to describe the Kurds and the Azerbaijanis it has worked.

The Soviets made a genuine effort to reach an accommodation with the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran. The prospects seemed promising, especially given the contacts between the two before the revolution and the years its leader, Abdorrahman Kassemli, spent in exile in Eastern Europe. However, relations between Moscow and KDP broke down because of the Kurds' hostility towards the central government and Moscow's continuing support for the new regime in Teheran, which has refused to make concessions to the Kurds and has tried to subdue them by force. A minority of the KDP leadership broke away and maintains ties to the Soviets and Tudeh but Moscow's relations with the Kassemli faction are now bad. ⁶⁰ Kurds engaged in fighting Teheran's forces are believed to have not only Soviet and Czech weapons but also American and Israeli weapons.

Soviet relations with Iranian Azerbaijanis constitute a special case. There are no particular targets of Soviet wrath among this group. In fact, the Soviets, including Soviet Azerbaijanis, express enthusiasm for the resurgence of Azerbaijan since the revolution. A host of Azeri-language publications have been established and there are Azeri-language theaters both in Tabriz, the metropolis of Azerbaijan, and Teheran. The Tudeh's Azerbaijani affiliate, the Azerbaijan Democratic Party, is actively involved in such ventures. Soviet Azerbaijanis seek contacts with their Iranian counterparts both within Iran and abroad. ⁶¹ Publications from Soviet Azerbaijan are sent to Iran.

The link between the Azerbaijanis on both sides of the border is stressed in Soviet parlance in which Iranian Azerbaijan is invariably termed "Southern Azerbaijan."

Yet all this may be less significant than it seems. The Soviet message to the Iranian Azerbaijanis has been that their interests are linked to the survival of the revolutionary regime in Teheran. Azerbaijanis were not alone, it is pointed out, in suffering under the shah; Persians suffered too, and have broken with the past by means of the revolution. There are references to Mosaddeq, but never in the sense that he was regarded as sympathetic to Azerbaijani autonomist demands, only in the sense that the paramount issue is to save a central government opposed to foreign domination from the dangers of counterrevolution.⁶²

There would certainly be problems with encouraging an Azerbaijani autonomist movement analogous to the one in 1945-1946, even apart from the possible international ramifications. The Iranian Azerbaijani population is more dispersed now than then, with many Azerbaijanis having moved to Teheran in search of better economic opportunities. Moreover, Moscow is concerned about unwholesome "chauvinism" among Soviet Azerbaijanis. Encouraging nationalism among Iranian Azerbaijanis and their sense of kinship with their Soviet cousins could be a very dangerous move, especially since there are perhaps ten million Iranian Azerbaijanis, while the total population of Soviet Azerbaijan, including Russians and members of other ethnic groups, is only a little over six million. Finally there are indications that for all their efforts, the Soviets and the Azerbaijan Democratic Party simply have not garnered much support

among Azerbaijani nationalists, who seem much more interested in Ayatollah Kazem Shariat-Madani's People's Muslim Republican Party.⁶³ Whether the ADP can pick up support in the wake of the IRP's crackdown on Shariat-Madani and his followers remains to be seen.

Clandestine Activities

Reports have surfaced in the West of Soviet clandestine activities in Iran. The very fact that they are clandestine makes their existence difficult to verify or categorically disprove. Rumors of KGB involvement in SAVAKH, the new regime's secret police, or the establishment of a Soviet listening post in Zahedan, the main city in Baluchestan, are countered by rumors which insist that such events have not taken place. There are also stories of Soviet infiltration of Iran across that country's northwestern border but these too are unconfirmed. A report from West Germany indicated that the Soviets in Teheran facilitated the seizure of the American embassy there. This account gives no specifics but argues simply that the people who took over the embassy must have had Soviet help because there is no other way they could have known about the embassy's layout and the location of its staff.⁶⁴ While this cannot be disproved outright, one can at least speculate that since the people who took over the embassy had the wherewithal to piece together hundreds of documents out through the U.S. embassy shredder, they might very well be able to find out whatever they wanted to know about the embassy's layout without necessarily being handed the information

by the Soviets. There are also rumors that Tudeh members were involved in the occupation of the embassy. During the fourteen months the embassy was held, there seem to have been different groups which entered the embassy compound acting without much coordination among them. Thus the possibility of Tudeh involvement cannot be automatically ruled out. Still, there is strong evidence that the take over was conceived by young followers of Khomeini and directed by a close associate of his, Hojat ol-Eslam Mohammad Kho'ini, without any promoting from the Tudeh. Moreover, in the immediate aftermath of the take over, the Tudeh, even more emphatically than the Soviet Union, expressed concern that the matter would go too far, that a demonstration at the embassy had produced good results but to continue the matter further could do more harm than good. Whatever the Soviets and the Tudeh may have done covertly in Iran, so far, it has brought them no discernable benefits.

Military Intervention

One of the traditional tactics of Russian and Soviet involvement in Iran, military intervention, has not been used since the fall of the monarchy, although occasional references to the 1921 treaty between the two countries and to Soviet occupation of the north during world war II raise this possibility. Nonetheless, there are reasons for doubting such a move is likely for the foreseeable future. The Soviets indicate that they believe they have gained as a result of the revolution. The costs of invading a country led by people the Soviets still feel they can deal with would seem prohibitively high. Iran's

situation is very different from Afghanistan's. By the time of the Soviet invasion, Afghanistan had a pro-Soviet, Communist government, which had lost control of most of the country to anti-Communist insurgents. In addition, the United States had made it known during the first Eisenhower administration that it considered American defense of Afghanistan unfeasible. As interested as the Soviets are in Iran, they have higher priorities in other countries. When Vietnam was embroiled in a war with Cambodia and China in 1979, that seems to have been considered more important than developments in Iran. Judging by the amount of coverage given both subjects in Pravda. Since 1980, anti-government sentiment in Poland has been a source of particular concern to Moscow. The Soviet Union certainly has the means to invade Iran. However, it has the means to do many things it has not done.

Conclusions

Soviet efforts to promote its interests in Iran since 1979 have produced mixed results. While the style is different, the overall substance of relations between the two countries has not changed much since the late years of the monarchy. Moscow was satisfied with its relations with Iran then and now. Soviet writings on Iran in the principal newspapers and the journals where the expert advisers on Iran publish continue to take a positive tone towards the revolution and the new regime. The economic relations between the two countries and Teheran's "anti-imperialism" are considered particularly gratifying. In

theoretical terms, the revolution has been progressive even though it is not Marxist, champions Islamic values, and is led by mullans.⁶⁸ In practical terms, the Islamic Republicans' hold on power is deemed stable and is expected to endure.⁶⁹ Yet Soviet observers also see analogies between recent events in Iran and earlier revolutions there and in Russia, even the Russia of 1917.⁷⁰ Under such circumstances, further changes might occur, but the Soviets have not revealed any expectations of what those changes might be or when they would occur.

Footnotes

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6. Moscow radio in Persian, June 19, 1981, ibid., June 22, 1981, H 4; January 1, 1982, ibid., January 5, 1982, D 1.
7. Moscow radio in Persian, October 1, 1980, ibid., October 2, 1980, H 3; October 10, 1980, ibid., October 14, 1980, H 1; January 9, 1982, ibid., January 12, 1982, H 5; Moscow radio in Arabic, October 22, 1980, ibid., October 23, H 1-2; Pravda, January 19, 1981, 6.
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THE SOVIET UNION AND THE PLO

by Galia Golan

Note: The body of this contribution was completed by the June 1982 outbreak of war in Lebanon. Despite the still volatile situation as of late August, the author attempted to update events in a postscript.

I. Development and Nature of Relationship

The Soviet Union generally supports national liberation movements on a tactical basis, i.e., viewing them instrumentally as a tactical option in Moscow's pursuit of its more strategic long-range objectives. Indeed the commencement of Soviet support often represents no more than a Soviet decision to cultivate an additional option or potential channel for the pursuit of Soviet interests in a particular country or region. This general approach has certainly been the case with regard the Soviet attitude towards the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The relationship is a tactical one, determined by the broader Soviet-Arab and, especially, the Soviet-United States relationships.

The Soviet Union apparently did not see even any tactical value in the PLO during its first few years of existence (1964-1968), for it rejected efforts by the new organization to make contact and gain Soviet support. Typical of the Soviet's almost indiscriminate investing for the future, Moscow did permit contacts with Palestinian youth and labor groups, bringing a small number of students to the Soviet Union for university studies. Moscow continued, however, to view the Arab-Israeli conflict as a conflict between states, and saw the Palestinian

problem only in terms of a refugee problem (as stated in UNSC resolution 242) and made no effort to compete with the Chinese support offered the PLO. This negative attitude began to change only late in 1968, early 1969, following Arafat's inclusion in an Egyptian delegation, led by Nasser, to Moscow in the summer of 1968. At this time the Soviets began to refer to the Palestinians as a "people" calling the PLO (in 1969) a "National Liberation Movement". They began providing propaganda support and by 1970, following another trip by Arafat to Moscow, gave permission for indirect supply of arms and equipment to the PLO.

The major reasons for this change were: (a) the fact that the Arab states, particularly Moscow's major Arab client, Egypt, had begun actively to champion the Palestinian cause, having decided to make it a focal point in the Arab-Israeli conflict; and (b) the achievement by the PLO of significant publicity in the world as a result of terrorist activities.

The Soviets still had serious reservations about fully supporting the PLO, as evidenced by the reprimand delivered the Syrian Communist Party in 1971 for placing too much emphasis on the Palestinians -- a reprimand which contained criticism of almost every one of the PLO's positions and policies. Nonetheless, in 1972 Soviet support for the PLO was raised, following another trip by Arafat, when Moscow agreed to the direct supply of arms and military equipment to the PLO. This "elevation" of support was the direct result of the deterioration in Soviet-Egyptian relations, i.e. an effort by Moscow to compensate for its losses in Egypt by deepening its relations

with its other clients in the Arab world, including Syria and Iraq. In the Fall of 1974, the Soviets came out officially in favor of a Palestinian state -- a reversal of its earlier position and a significant stepping up in its support for the PLO. This step was taken for a combination of reasons, coming as it did just prior to the Rabat conference of Arabs heads of state. It would appear that the Soviets were aware of the decision taken by the Arab leaders to pass a resolution in favor of a Palestinian state (on the West Bank and Gaza) as had finally been agreed in principle earlier that year by the Palestine National Council¹. By supporting this idea, the Soviets most likely hoped to counter both the pro-American stance Egypt would be advocating at the conference and the very real possibility of continued United States' progress in the region given the two disengagement agreements negotiated by Washington and U.S. efforts to open talks for a second Egyptian-Israeli agreement and/or a Jordanian-Israeli disengagement agreement. Probably with the same objectives in mind, the Soviets had agreed a few months earlier to the opening of a PLO office in Moscow, which decision was finally implemented only two years later -- on the eve of an official visit by King Hussein to Moscow.

It is possible that the decision regarding the PLO office was also dictated by bilateral PLO-Soviet considerations in addition to the broader regional and global calculations: in 1974, the Soviets may have sought to strengthen Arafat in his battle with Habash over various issues, including the issue of limited demands for statehood; in 1976 the Soviets have been trying to mitigate Arafat's dissatisfaction over Moscow's

position of restraint with regard to the PLO in the Lebanese conflict (Arafat did not visit Moscow in 1976, reportedly because of this displeasure). In 1977 a temporary step up of Soviet support occurred when the Soviets, for a few months, placed the return of the Palestinian refugees in their official slogan on a settlement. This "elevation" was in direct response to a PLO request, but Soviet acquiescence probably came to counter (in a manner of one-upmanship) what appeared to be a United States approach to the PLO, when President Carter spoke of the need for a "homeland" for the Palestinians. More significant and direct was the official Soviet recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in November 1978 -- immediately after Camp David. And finally, in October, 1981, the granting of diplomatic status to the PLO office in Moscow, which may have been prompted by Moscow's renewed concern over possible US-PLO contacts (encouraged at about this time by various American figures). As in the other cases connected with the PLO offices, this "step-up" may also have been an effort to reassure the Palestinians in view of Moscow's improved relations with Jordan and -- again -- to placate Arafat over the Soviet failure to supply all arms requested by the PLO in South Lebanon (the issue reportedly was Sam-6s; and Arafat reportedly did not visit Moscow in 1980 because of his differences with Moscow on this and other issues).

From this brief history of Soviet-PLO relations, prior to the June 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, it emerges that the Soviets have used their stances on the Palestinian issue to

enhance Moscow's position in the Arab world and, increasingly, to counter U.S. inroads, successes or potential successes in the Middle East. This use of support of the PLO had been part of the PLO had been part of Soviet tactics since the Yom Kippur War of supporting the more radical Arab demands, so as to prove Moscow's usefulness in their eyes of the Arabs, and essentially in the eyes of the United States and Israel, with regard to the negotiating process in the Middle East. Thus, the Soviets could claim to be the only superpower interested in a comprehensive settlement rather than the partial agreements offered by the United States; at the same time they can claim to the letter that only Moscow could control the war option, moderate the radicals or even bring them to the negotiating table and/or recognition of Israel. Increased support for the PLO had been part of this tactic, assuming over increasing importance as the Palestinian issue itself assumed the dimensions of super power competition. Yet the tactical nature of the relationship remained, insofar as the Soviets have never let their support for the PLO overshadow or interfere in the pursuit of Soviet interests (such as the reentry of the Soviet Union into the negotiating process), or exacerbating the prospects of confrontation with the USA), or change their basic positions, be it on the nature of an Arab-Israeli settlement or other regional or global issues. A revealing example of this occurred in the spring of 1977 when, rather than let the problem of PLO participation prevent the planned reconvening of the Geneva conference, Moscow agreed to the formulation of PLO participation only at some, as yet undetermined, "second stage" of the forthcoming conference.

Although the Soviets sought some formula for Palestinian participation (viz. the Soviet-American joint communique of October 1977 as a possible substitute for resolution 242), Moscow was nonetheless willing to ignore its formally proclaimed commitment to PLO participation "from the beginning and on an equal footing" so as to obtain its own return to the negotiating process. In examining below a number of decisive factors in the Soviet-PLO relationship, we shall see other positions which the Soviets have refused to alter or compromise, despite opposition by the PLO and what PLO officials see as a contradiction of PLO interests.

II. Devisive Factors

Those factors which provide for potential or actual conflicts between the Soviet Union and the PLO, or, at the very least, create problems in their ongoing relationships, can be divided into two categories: factors connected with the nature of the PLO and factors connected with the positions or policies, including methods, of the PLO. Within the first category, the fact that the PLO is a roof-organization, encompassing several varied, indeed diverse, groupings, often at loggerheads with each other, poses a number of problems for Moscow. The Soviets prefer that all the national liberation forces be situated organizationally under one roof, for such a situation eliminates the necessity of supporting one group to the exclusion of all others, which would limit Soviet options and increase the risks and future vulnerability of having banked on the wrong group.

Moreover, such a situation theoretically rules out costly (in energy and resources) rivalries, while providing a clear address for the channeling of Soviet aid and advice to a clearly identified, responsible decision-making unit. Unfortunately for the Soviet Union, the PLO only partially fulfills these requirements. The organization is torn by internal disagreements and rivalries, complicated by the involvement of various Arab states, supporting -- indeed directing -- one group or another. Thus, the interference of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria or Libya can effect PLO decision-making or behavior, while the inherent insecurity of the leadership group, specifically of Arafat, places in jeopardy what gains or concessions the Soviets have often had to struggle hard to achieve with regard to PLO decisions and policies.

Within the internal kaleidoscope of the PLO, the Soviets have in the past had no choice but to support Arafat and his Fatah organization, for it is by far the largest and most dominant group. Yet the Fatah is basically bourgeois in class background and composition, permeated with religious Muslim elements (who, like Arafat himself, sympathize to some degree with the revival of fundamental Islam in Iran), and lacking in any ideology, save what the Soviets view as bourgeois nationalism. All of these negative characteristics are clearly noted by the Soviet media, indicating the persistence of these factors which operate against Soviet control or influence over Fatah in the long as well the short-run. Yet it is Fatah which gives the tone and major content to the PLO. The two Marxist organizations -- Nayif Hawatmeh's Peoples Democratic Front for

the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP) and George Habash's Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) are, at least ideologically, more acceptable to the Soviet Union, but even combined, they represent only a very small proportion of the PLO membership and stand no chance of taking control. Moreover, while Hawatmeh's extremely small PDFLP is very close to Moscow and may even be counted upon, to a large degree, to do Moscow's bidding, the somewhat stronger Habash is a much more radical and independent breed of Marxist, whose positions on policies and tactics are, more often than not, diametrically opposed to those of Moscow. Indeed, between 1974 and 1978 there was an open, polemical split between Moscow and the PFLP, with relations improving -- and eventually deepening -- only after Camp David and Habash's support of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The other, still smaller, organizations, such as Sai'qa, the Popular Struggle Front, the Palestine Liberation Front and the Arab Liberation Front are of little interest to Moscow, directly controlled as they are by various Arab states.

There have been various attempts by the Soviet to gain greater influence in the PLO via a more dependable channel, i.e. a Communist channel, but the PLO has consistently resisted such encroachments. Al Ansar, created by the Arab Communist parties, was disbanded in 1972, having been criticized within the PLO for its position in favor of the continued existence of Israel and its opposition to the use of terror. Its successor, the Palestine National Front, organized primarily for use on the West Bank, was somewhat more successful. It achieved two places in the PLO

Executive Committee, but its chances for gaining any influence in the PLO were severely hampered by the disintegration of the organization on the West Bank due to deportations on the part of the Israeli authorities.² Moreover, the direct bid to place more Communists in the PLO Executive at the most recent Palestine National Council (1981) failed altogether. Moscow probably hopes that with the creation of an independent Palestine Communist Party on the West Bank, the Communists will have a firmer basis for demanding direct representation in the PLO. In 1974 the West Bank branch of the Jordanian Communist Party was declared the Palestine Communist Organization, subordinate, still, to the Jordanian CP; sometime in late 1981 this organization became a full-fledged, independent Communist Party. The creation of such a party probably had less to do with gaining influence in the PLO than with the goal of securing a more dominant position on the West Bank in anticipation of autonomy and the political jockeying connected with the possibility of the creation of a Palestinian state. The Soviet tactic is not to attempt to substitute the Communists for the PLO or compete with it; tactically the old idea of a common "front" with non-Communists has priority. But the overall purposes are, on the one hand, to strengthen the Communists by giving them an open, publicly recognized role and, on the other hand, to establish a basis for Soviet control and thereby ensure Moscow's interests and line.

In addition to the nature of the PLO and its contingent parts, other divisive factors in the Soviet PLO relationship stem from differences of opinion on certain substantive issues, tactics, and methods.

The substantive issues include the existence of the state of Israel, the locale of a Palestinian state (alongside or instead of Israel, either within its 1947 partition plan borders or its June 4, 1967 border); the return of the refugees; possibly the issue of Jerusalem; southern Lebanon; and Afghanistan. The Soviets have consistently argued with the Palestinians that it is unrealistic, and therefore undesirable, to seek the destruction of Israel -- either militarily or politically (by creating a secular Palestinian state in all of Palestine) or even to try drastically to reduce it to the 1947 partition plan lines. According to the Soviets, the only objective worthy of pursuit, i.e., one which stands a chance of success and which, most important for the Soviets, does not carry with it the certainty of war and superpower military confrontation, is the creation of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza. This is the position implicitly accepted by Fatah and even the Palestine National Council insofar as the latter's 1974 resolutions called for the setting up of a Palestinian "authority" on any territory liberated. The PLO, Fatah, and even Arafat refuse to go beyond this explicitly because of the strong opposition within the PLO, and even within Fatah, to accepting the existence of Israel. Only Hawatmeh -- and the Communists -- explicitly and openly accept the Soviet position, although Hawatmeh occasionally claims that this is only the first step, presumably leading to the 1947 borders or all of Palestine (the Soviets delete such comments from their own accounts of Hawatmeh's statements). This issue has had a most divisive effect on the Soviet-PLO alliance; the

Soviets were not willing to support the demand for a Palestinian state until there was at least implicit PLO agreement to the Soviet position, which agreement will probably remain so long as Arafat retains his power. The refugee issue is much less important or pressing from the Soviet point of view, though the differences in their attitudes could cause some difficulties in the future. Probably realizing that the PLO position favoring the return of all the Palestinian refugees, their descendents and families, to their former homes in Israel could be viewed by Israel as tantamount to an attempt to destroy the Jewish state, the Soviet position (though rarely expressed) calls for "return" of the refugees to the new Palestinian state when created or "to their homes in accordance with the UN resolution", i.e., UN resolution 194 of 1948 which calls for "return" of those willing to live in peace with their neighbors. Similarly, Jerusalem is not a bone of contention between the Soviet Union and the PLO at present, but a difference in positions -- the Soviets being much less committed than the PLO to Jerusalem, all of it, being the capital of the Palestinian state -- could cause difficulties in the future.

The Palestinian struggle in southern Lebanon, first against the Syrians and then against the Israelis, has been a serious source of incompatibility, for the PLO, particularly Fatah, has long pressed the Soviets to take a more direct military role, or, at the very least, to provide more advanced weapons. The Soviets, for their part, have been relatively restrained, out of concern that massive Israeli retaliation could lead to a new Arab-Israeli war. Arafat reportedly refrained from visiting

Moscow in 1976 and again in 1980 because of this issue; and his second-in-command, Abu Iyad, has explicitly criticized the Soviet Union for its reticence. There are other points of dissent on the Palestinians' part regarding issues not directly connected with the Arab-Israeli conflict. The change in the Soviet position on the Fatah backed Eritrean liberation struggle was undoubtedly one of them. More important, however, was the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The PLO has officially, if unenthusiastically, supported the Soviets on this issue, but Arafat, unlike Hawatmeh and Habash, has been much more sympathetic to the Muslim cause than Moscow would like. Although willing to mediate between the Afghanistan regime and Pakistan and even Iran, Arafat has not endorsed the invasion or given Moscow his full backing on the matter.

Numerous issues of methods and tactics are also the source of controversy between the Soviet Union and the PLO. The most fundamental and important of these is the complex of issues connected with negotiations, i.e., recognition of Israel, acceptance of Resolution 242, Geneva versus armed struggle, specifically terrorism. While the Soviets have, over the years, tried to persuade the PLO to agree to the idea of Israeli-PLO mutual recognition, they have invested much more energy and time in trying to get the PLO to accept Resolution 242, with its implicit recognition of Israel, thus paving the way for Palestinian participation in negotiations such as Geneva. After some initial hesitation, the PLO did unofficially accept the Soviet-US statement of October 1977 as a substitute for

resolution 242 and there are signs that in view of the general Arab rejection of this resolution (viz. the decision of the Arab summit in Amman in 1981), Moscow has abandoned its direct pressure for 242 in favor of some other formula. Thus Moscow no longer advocates the Geneva conference, based as it was on 242, but rather some other form of international or multilateral conference. Yet there are many forces in the PLO, even in Fatah, which oppose negotiations, advocating only armed struggle. These forces came to the fore most recently on the issue of the European initiative, the acceptance of which some saw as Palestinian capitulation. Arafat just barely won out on this matter (pro-negotiations) in the PNC of 1981, but his foes were joined by Moscow and its supporters. While not essentially opposed to PLO contacts with Europe, the Soviets construe the European initiative controversy within the PLO as a prelude to the most serious source of a Soviet-PLO rift -- the possibility that the PLO under Arafat might eventually opt for Western, and behind it American, sponsorship. This has been, and will probably remain, the most serious dilemma for the Soviets, for by attempting to persuade the PLO to accept the idea of negotiations and seeking to bolster the moderates within the organization, Moscow is strengthening the very elements which render a shift towards the West more feasible. It is in this context that Soviet opposition, or at least discomfort, over such matters as the Jordanian-PLO rapprochement or PLO support for the Saudi Arabian peace plan must be seen. Even as Moscow improves its own relations with Jordan and seeks such an improvement with Riyadh,

it has to combat these same tendencies within the PLO -- and they are personified by Arafat.

Even though the Soviets find themselves in temporary agreement with the more radical elements -- against Arafat -- on some matters, the basic Soviet support for the idea of a negotiated settlement has placed Moscow at loggerheads with most elements of the PLO at one time or another on the issue of armed struggle. While agreement exists with such as Arafat, at least on the simultaneous use of political as well as military methods, the issue of terrorism has been a source of strain. While the Soviets train Palestinians in the use of arms and armed struggle, they prefer that this method be subordinated to political means and limited to sabotage or resistance in the occupied territories. Moscow's attitude towards operations inside Israel is somewhat more ambivalent, even condemnatory, though when the operation is carried out by Fatah, the Soviets generally try to characterize it as an action against military targets, so as to legitimize it as "resistance". International terror, however, is not advocated or supported, ostensibly because Moscow considers it counter-productive, in reality, probably, because the Soviets themselves are vulnerable to, and have been victims of, hijackings. Thus for all that the KGB is involved with extremist groups around the world and does, in fact, provide training, one of the issues on which Moscow and the PLO have clashed is terrorism. Along with the idea of a "mini-state", the issue of terrorism was the point over which Moscow and Habash broke forces in 1974. The Soviets would appear to have been less adamant

after Camp David, but PLO use of international terrorism also declined after 1978.

III. Cohesive Factors

There are two types of factors which operate (or are hoped by the Soviets to operate) in the direction of cohesiveness in the Soviet-PLO relationship: the dependency of the PLO upon the Soviet Union and the mutuality of interests between the two. In fact, however, as stated from the outset, the real degree of cohesiveness is determined primarily by factors outside the bilateral relationship itself, i.e., by the state of Soviet-Arab relations (and the position of the Arab states vis a vis the PLO) and the state of Soviet-United States relations (and the position of the United States vis a vis the Palestinians).

The PLO is dependent upon the Soviet Union for the provision of political support. This support consists of support for the Palestinians' demands and for the PLO as an organization on the international scene, e.g., in the UN and its affiliates; in bilateral talks between the Soviet Union and representatives of other countries, including Western countries (mainly to have the Palestinian issue and/or the PLO at least mentioned); in conferences and meetings organized by the Soviets, Soviet fronts such as the World Peace Council, or other organizations, specifically on the Palestinians or related, and even unrelated, subjects. Soviet political support comes in the form of opening PLO offices and providing official recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians. Assistance in the PLO's propaganda effort includes direct Soviet media

propaganda on the PLO's behalf and on the Palestinian issue. In all areas of political support Moscow's allies, including Cuba but excluding Rumania, follow the Soviet lead.³ Rumania, in keeping with its generally independent foreign policy stance, has its own position on the PLO and provides political support in other ways, independent of Moscow.

A second means employed by the Soviets to create PLO dependency is military support, which consists of the provision of training and arms and equipment. PLO people are trained in camps located in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Cuba and North Korea. (The last is not necessarily part of the Soviet effort inasmuch as the North Koreans tend to be independent of Moscow, leaning towards China, which, in any case, also aids the PLO). While this training is military (use of explosives, conventional warfare, sabotage, etc.), political indoctrination is also provided, while training in political intelligence, and agitation-propaganda work is presumably also offered to certain trainees. There is no evidence that Soviet or Soviet bloc advisors have been sent to instruct PLO forces in the Middle East aside from unconfirmed rumors in 1978 that 20-30 Soviet instructors were present in Lebanon along with some East Germans, and later, Cubans.

On the other hand, Soviet and East bloc "diplomatic" personnel in Lebanon are in regular contact with the PLO, some of them presumably operating as at least security/intelligence advisors, if not more. The presence of Libyan advisors in Lebanon does not appear to be directly connected with the Soviet

Union. Arms and military equipment have been provided since 1970, both directly and indirectly, through Syria, Libya and Iraq (and possibly South Yemen). The Soviet bloc is by far the major source of armaments for the PLO, with Saudi Arabia, and to a lesser extent other Arab states, paying the bills. China provides some equipment and Western, including U.S., French and West German equipment has been found amongst the Palestinians' arms, presumably having been obtained through international arms merchants and/or provided through third parties. Other types of Soviet support include medical, educational and economic aid, but none of these categories is particularly large or significant. According to Palestinian sources, the Soviet Union does not provide any direct financial aid; Saudi Arabia is the PLO's main financial backer. Dependency may also be sought by Soviet involvement in internal power plays and politics, viz, the effort to inject Communists into the PLO's ruling bodies, to increase Communist influence amongst the Palestinians in the occupied territories, and the attention given the PLO-Marxists, particularly the pro-Soviet Marxists around Hawatmeh. Whether the Soviets have supported any of the efforts to replace Arafat is not at all certain, however, inasmuch as the contenders such Abu Iyad or non-Fatah people, have all tended to be more extremist in their views, sometimes critical of Soviet moderation, and, in some cases, directly connected with various Arab governments (therefore offering little prospect for Soviet control).

All of the above types of dependency-creating tactics, insofar as they are successful, may also be used by the Soviets

as instruments of control and channels for influence. Theoretically, at least, political support can be withheld as a lever for bringing about changes in PLO policies, tactics, personnel, etc. The Soviets withheld support for a Palestinian state until the PLO agreed to the mini-state idea, and Moscow for quite a long time withheld official recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. However, neither of these Soviet "concessions", nor any others, came about as a direct result of some change in the PLO, but rather as a result of other Soviet considerations (growing U.S. influence and the coming Rabat decisions, Camp David, and so forth). For all that Soviet historians try to depict Soviet support as a function of the change in the PLO to a progressive mass organization, bent on negotiations and reasons, other Soviet writers have been sanguine enough to admit that these attributes are far from having been attained, and, implicitly, that Moscow has not succeeded in converting the PLO to a Marxist-oriented ideology and the Soviets' various substantive and tactical positions. As far as can be determined, Moscow has continuously pressed its views without tying compliance to any threat of continued Soviet political support. Indeed, the picture which has emerged is one more of the Soviet Union rather than the PLO as the supplicant, and Moscow as being acutely aware of the potential for a shift in PLO orientation.

In the area of military aid, the Soviets have achieved somewhat more dependency, insofar as the nature of the aid supplied can directly affect certain end results. Thus, the

Soviets have generally succeeded in controlling the combat options open to the Palestinians in southern Lebanon, though it is not certain that they have had similar success in influencing the PLO's decisions as to when, where and how to use the weapons that the PLO already possesses. While it is possible that the Soviets have used types and dates of arms supplies as a lever for influencing PLO decisions, much the way they tried to do in the past with Egypt (1971-1973) and Syria (1976), there is no evidence that such arms blackmail has, in fact, succeeded any more than it did with Egypt and Syria in the past. The facts that the PLO can (and does) obtain much of its Soviet equipment indirectly from various Arab states and that it can purchase weapons with Saudi money, limit the effectiveness of arms supplies as a lever for control. No other channel of potential control (medical, education, economic support, or involvement in internal PLO politiking) has achieved sufficient dimension or importance to be of any use to the Soviets, however, the last of these (involvement in internal PLO politiking), is probably most conducive to control or influence. The recruitment of pro-Soviet PLO people, their elevation to positions of power, assistance to one group against another in internal political fights, penetration amongst the masses, as well as inside the organizations and ruling bodies -- these are the means the Soviets have traditionally used for achieving dependency and control. The major conveyer of Soviet wishes remains the Soviet ambassador in Beirut and other Soviet officials who meet with PLO leaders; the pro-Soviet PLO Marxists or Soviet agents within the

PLO do not yet have sufficient power to dictate Soviet wishes to the PLO executive.

The second type of factor for cohesiveness of the Soviet-PLO relationship is the mutuality of interests between the two -- which is, basically, mutual instrumentality or exploitation. The fundamental mutual interest is opposition to the ascendancy of America's influence at the expense of Moscow. The Soviet Union can offer the PLO another champion in the international arena -- and a most powerful champion at that. Aside from serving as another Soviet client in the Middle East, the PLO can offer the Soviets certain services such as mediation, to wit, between Iran and Afghanistan, Eritrea and Ethiopia, Somalia and Ethiopia, as well as channels for contacts with various movements such as the Sandanisti, the Italian Red Brigades, the Japanese Red Army and others who have trained in PLO camps.

The relationship, from the view of mutuality of interests, is not entirely balanced, and we have already examined the divisive factors which render the mutuality of interests somewhat vulnerable. Yet for all that the PLO appears to be the greater beneficiary, and the dependency necessary for control is solely lacking in reality, so that the PLO is still not the organization the Soviets would have it be, Moscow obviously considers the PLO a sufficient asset to warrant efforts to strengthen the cohesive factors in the relationship.

Postscript

This paper was prepared some time before the Israeli war in Lebanon in the summer of 1982, but the events of the war have borne out a number of hypotheses and trends already noted. The earlier Soviet reticence to assist PLO military activities from Lebanon because of concern that these actions might lead to an Israeli invasion, became during the war, almost total Soviet inaction on behalf of the PLO, lest the Soviet Union be dragged into the military arena. Thus the tactical nature of Moscow's interest in the PLO became blatantly clear.

Early in the war, Moscow used two separate channels to make the limits of its support understood to the PLO. In response to what the PLO radio termed an Arafat call to Moscow to "help stop the Israeli aggression," the PLO representative in Moscow, Muhammed ash-Sha'ir, issued a statement on June 8 that the Soviet Union would continue to send military supplies to the Palestinians, but would send no troops, adding that no troops had been requested.⁴ None of the above appeared in the Soviet version of the Sha'ir statement, but this Soviet position presumably was also conveyed to PLO political department chief Kaddumi in his talk with Gromyko at the UN the next day.⁵ Almost immediately, Abu Iyad, a critic of the Soviet Union in the past, publicly expressed the PLO's disappointment with the Soviets, saying that from "the first hour, we wanted the Soviet position to be more radical, but our Soviet brothers have their own way of acting."⁶ Soviet sensitivity to such criticism -- of which this was only the beginning -- was one of the factors prompting the June 14, Soviet government statement. Although its wording was

to some degree the public expression of the note sent to Reagan a few days earlier (primarily from concern over Israeli-Syrian fighting), the tone and timing were clearly designed to restore the cease-fire, lest Israel take Beirut, but its warning to Israel lacked the strong threat expressed at critical times in previous Arab-Israeli wars. (Indeed, the PLO representative in the Persian Gulf was to make just this point, critical of Moscow, several days later.⁷) On the critical point of actual Soviet assistance to the Palestinians (or Syrians) the statement was vague, even defensive. It said only that "The Soviet Union takes the side of the Arabs, not in words, but in deeds. It is working to bring about the withdrawal of the aggressor from Lebanon."⁸ The "deeds" referred to were limited to diplomatic action, although Soviet propaganda broadcasts implied, by reference to past cases, that this also meant Moscow's role in the creation of Arab military strength.⁹ Even this, however, said nothing of the present, prompting increasingly explicit Palestinian criticism over the following weeks. Moscow's ally, Hawatmeh, calling on the Soviets to use "all possible means including military power," complained that Moscow was satisfying itself with diplomatic and political pressures, the effect of which was "limited, if not zero."¹⁰ The Soviets were apparently no more forthcoming in the letter that "it contains pretty words, but they have no basis on the ground."¹¹ Abu Iyad had already termed Soviet "inactivity" as inexplicable.¹² Prior to his early July visit to Moscow, as part of the Arab League delegations designated to visit all the permanent members of the Security Council, Kaddumi was quoted as

planning to ask the Soviets for "drastic action," saying that
condemning Israel was not sufficient.¹³ According to Arab
sources, quoted in the West, Gromyko told Kaddumi (and the
accompanying Moroccan and Kuwaiti Foreign Ministers) that Soviet
military aid in the form of troops or combat ships was out of the
question, refusing to change the Soviet position or increase its
role in Lebanon in any way.¹⁴ The Soviets offered little else in
answer to the Palestinians' demands and criticism aside from
protestations of how much the Soviet Union was doing,
minimization of the Palestinians' losses (meaning that their own
arms and training, like that of the Syrians, were well provided
by Moscow), and the more frequent argument employed implicitly
and later explicitly that the Arab states were supposed to be the
Palestinians' greatest defenders. Citing help from their own
allies, South Yemen and Syria, and their potential ally, Iran,
the Soviets predictably tried to shift the criticism to the Arab
world, citing its lack of unity and failure to act.¹⁵

While the criticism of the Soviet Union came from almost
every quarter of the PLO, particularly Fatah, the one surprising
exception was George Habash. Once the most outspoken critic of
Moscow, Habash's silence regarding Moscow during the war, can
only be an indication of how far Soviet-PFLP relations did indeed
progress after Camp David, and the degree of cooperation Habash
apparently hoped to maintain with the Soviets in the future.
While Habash's silence may not in fact have been significant, it
is a strong possibility that one of the outcomes of the summer's
conflict will be a strengthening of the radical wing of the PLO,
as opposed to Arafat. Arafat will have still greater difficulty

in arguing that he was right to press for the political approach, the road of international pressures and state alliances, the option of negotiations and implied compromise in view of the Israeli government's choice of the military option. The likelihood of the radicalization of the PLO, and its probable return to terrorism as its only means of operating, has already been perceived by the Soviets, but it is not necessarily a positive development in Soviet eyes.¹⁶ There remains a wide gap between Moscow's position and that of the radicals, not only on the issue of international terrorism, but on the whole spectrum of questions related to an Arab-Israeli settlement -- including the very idea of a settlement. Gromyko, in his press conference on June 22, reiterated this position, underlining the point of greatest conflict between Moscow and the radical Palestinians:¹⁷ Moscow's recognition of Israel's right to exist.

The radicalization of the PLO is but one problem Moscow may have to face. A more serious problem for the Soviets may be that the Americans will emerge the winner from the whole conflict. This, in fact, was one of the major Soviet concerns from the beginning of the war, probably the major concern once the Syrian-Israeli hostilities virtually ceased and the period of negotiations set in. From its first announcements of the war, the Soviet Union sought to make it clear to the Arab world that the United States was as much to blame and as deeply involved as the Israeli attackers themselves. Moscow sought to exploit the conflict to hamper the United States, both by drawing a straight line between Camp David, the U.S.-Israeli "strategic alliance"

and the summer war, and by encouraging the Arab states to employ the oil weapon against America. Thus, as early as June 8, the Soviets called on the Arab states to help the Palestinians, but this appeal was not a call for Arab military aid, but rather for the safer, but more effective -- from the Soviet point of view --

¹⁸
use of the oil weapon. Beneath this perhaps far-fetched hope of achieving an active -- and significant -- anti-American policy from the Arab states, which might even unite the more reactionary Arab states like Saudi Arabia with the more radical ones, the Soviets were most likely intent upon limiting American exploitation of the crisis to further improve its position. The prominence of this global calculation in Soviet thinking was most
¹⁹
apparent in the warning sent by Brzhnev to Reagan on July 8.

For weeks the PLO had been surrounded and bombarded in West Beirut, there had been the daily threat of Israeli occupation and destruction of the PLO strongholds in the city. Yet during all this time the Soviets did little to nothing, choosing to respond only when a new element appeared: the possibility of U.S. marines being sent to Lebanon to assist in the evacuation of the PLO. The Soviet warning was couched mainly in terms of preventing an Israeli move on West Beirut, and it was relatively milder than the June 14 statement in that it omitted any reference to the proximity of the area to the Soviet Union. But it was quite clear in its opposition to any importation of U.S. forces into the area, a step which the Soviets undoubtedly saw as a serious change in the super power status quo in the area, reminiscent of the days of powerful American intervention in the Middle East (Lebanon 1958) to prop up the regimes of its choice

against the threat of pro-Soviet moves elsewhere in the area. the July 8 warning did not even mention Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, an omission designed perhaps to lower the price necessary for American agreement to desist from sending troops, a move obviously considered more threatening to Soviet interests than the continued presence of the Israeli army in Lebanon.

The American troop threat mitigated by their limitation in a multi-lateral supervisory force, the problem of an American diplomatic victory remained. The Americans having successfully mediated the solution to the PLO presence in Beirut, the possibility remained that they might achieve a modus operandi with the organization. Having no diplomatic relations with Israel, and no patron-client relationship with Lebanon, the Soviets had no way of challenging the American-conducted negotiations. According to a Saudi source, the Soviets refused a Palestinian request to send a Soviet negotiator on the grounds that the absence of Soviet-Israeli relations would be an obstacle to the success of such an effort. For a certain period of time, it appeared that the Soviets encouraged the Palestinians and the Syrians, or anyone else approached as a potential host for the PLO, to resist a settlement. The Soviets may have hoped thereby to prevent an American mediated solution, as well as to demonstrate that the Americans, after all, could offer the Arabs nothing. At best, the negotiations could be shifted to the UN or a multi-national forum which would include the Soviet Union, a suggestion which was raised by the Soviets late in July. When, however, Israeli preparedness to take West Beirut became more

than apparent, the tensions on the Eastern (Israel-Syria) front, Syria and others suddenly changed their positions regarding a Palestinian evacuation. The sudden change, which included South Yemen's agreement to receive Palestinians, strongly suggests Soviet intervention, presumably because the Soviets became convinced that Israel had reached the limits of its patience and war was about to break out again in full force.

There is always the possibility too that the conflict in Lebanon strengthened those persons or forces in Moscow which were opposed to such massive Soviet involvement with the Palestinians or in this area at all. It has been argued over the years that elements of the Soviet military opposed such involvement on the grounds that it was too risky, that the Arab clients were too unstable and uncertain, and that war, including confrontation with the United States, or at the very least, loss of modern Soviet equipment, would be the result. Others were said to have opposed supporting non-Marxist groups, believing the investment to be worthless over the long run, while others may in fact have pressed for greater support, as part of the Soviet-Chinese competition amongst the national liberation movements. Conversely, there were those who preferred only State-to-State relations as the cornerstone of Soviet policy, no matter how progressive or Marxist the non-ruling client group.

There has also been some evidence of persons or groups favoring detente as distinct from those who seek every opportunity to denigrate the possibility of detente with the United States. In the Lebanese crisis, there actually was a divergence³ between the standard Soviet line and the comments of

one journalist, Izvestiia's Middle East political expert, Bovin, who at least twice sought to dissociate the United States from responsibility for the Israeli action. ²² Bovin's name has been associated with that of Politburo member Andropov, just as various personalities and institutions have been identified with each of the above views. It has been speculated that the lack of soviet aid to the PLO at this time was evidence of a change in Soviet policy as a result of a shift amongst the power groups in the Kremlin, possibility in connection with the death of Suslov several months ago. Given the closed nature of the Soviet political system, all this is but speculation, but the Soviet-PLO relationship and Soviet behaviour towards the PLO have been both clear and consistent over the years. Soviet behaviour in this crisis was indeed totally consistent with, and the logical consequence of, the policies pursued by the Brzhnev regime over the past ten years, if not longer.

FOOTNOTES

1. Habash, disapproving of the idea of declaring for a state at the time, because of his opposition to a mini-state on the West Bank and Gaza, refused to participate in Rabat, just as he refused to go to Moscow in the summer of 1974 because of his differences with the Soviets on this and other issues.

2. Its place on the West Bank was taken by the more radical National Guidance Committee, established after Camp David, but the Communists were unsuccessful in their efforts to take over this group.

3. The Soviet Union's allies in Eastern Europe and Cuba also provide the Soviet Union with a proxy for those occasions when the Soviets do not want to act directly, e.g., stating a more extreme position than Moscow is yet ready to advocate formally, to launch trial balloons, to provide contacts which the Soviets don't want to undertake directly (such as contacts with Habash during the 1974-78 rift between him and Moscow) and so forth.

4. WAFA, June 9, 1982.

5. See for example, Pravda, June 9, 1982, Radio Peace and Progress in Arabic, June 9, 1982.

6. Radio Monte Carlo, June 11, 1982.

7. Qatar News Agency, June 28, 1982.

8. Tass, June 14, 1982.

9. Moscow radio in Arabic, June 16, 1982.

10. Reuter, June 26, 1982; AFP, June 26, 1982. For still stronger criticism by Hawatmeh, see AFP, July 15, 1982. The only

PLD official to visit Moscow in June was the Hawatmeh organization's Yasir abd-Rbbu, a member of the PLD Executive. The Soviet media carried only his words of praise for the Soviet Union (e.g. Moscow radio in Arabic, June 28, 1982). There were reports of a high-level Palestinian delegation meeting with the Soviets in Moscow and in Damascus (AFP, June 18; Radio Damascus, June 19, 1982 respectively).

11. Radio Monte Carlo, June 26, 1982.

12. Le Monde, June 22, 1982.

13. Kuwait News Agency and al-Siyassah, July 4, 1982.

14. Herald Tribune, July 7, 1982.

15. Sovetskaya Rossiya, June 10, 1982; Soviet Television, June 11, 1982 (Primakov); Moscow radio in Arabic, July 2, 1982; Tass, June 24, 25, July 1 and 2, 1982 Moscow domestic radio, July 4, 1982.

16. See, for example, Pravda's political commentator, Demchenko, on Moscow domestic radio, July 4, 1982.

17. Pravda, June 23, 1982.

18. Radio Peace and Progress in Arabic, June 8, 1982.

19. Tass, July 8, 1982.

20. Al-Riyad, July 13, 1982.

21. On June 20, radio foreign affairs specialist Shishlin, in an argument with Izvestiia political expert Bovin, remarked that it was not now time for an international conference, though this Soviet idea was a good one. This comment, and the fact that this conference idea was in fact only proposed a month later, suggest that these differences of opinion on the issue in Moscow. (Moscow domestic radio, June 20, 1982).

22. Soviet television, June 8, 1982; Moscow domestic radio, June 20, 1982; the latter contained the argument between Bøvin and Shishkin.

LIBYA AND THE SOVIET UNION: ALLIANCE AT ARMS' LENGTH

By Ellen Laipson

Introduction

The relationship between the Soviet Union and Libya under the leadership of Colonel Mu'amar Qaddafi has been enigmatic; its financial and military dimensions are impressive, and have expanded rapidly in the past six years, but the ties are clearly less than a formal alliance or a conventional client/sponsor relationship. In fact, while there are obvious convergent objectives in particular areas, there is a noticeable disassociation on general ideological attitudes and long-range goals.

On one level, the Soviet Union finds in Libya a strongly anti-Western state with an activist leadership willing to use its own resources to encourage weaker regional states to limit their ties to the West. But at the same time, Qaddafi has proven to be a reliable trading partner of major Western industrial states, declares itself non-aligned, and has refused to consider a Soviet base on its soil. The relationship defies easy explanations from the Soviet perspective as well; the Soviets see only limited opportunities in Libya, place restrictions on the depth and scope of the ties, and may see Libya more as a wealthy trading partner than a reliable political ally. There are indications, however, that changing regional dynamics of the past two years may be tipping the balance in the Soviets' favor, and by responding to

Libyan concerns, they may strengthen their military position in the area.

The Soviet connection to Libya cannot be seen as a model for its Third World relations because it is unique and unusual in several respects. Libya is at once an extremely wealthy and very underdeveloped nation. Its wealth affords it greater flexibility than more dependent states; it can purchase the developmental services it seeks on the open market. But at the same time, its internal weaknesses make it dependent on outside help, and for security and practical reasons, this help often comes from Soviet or Eastern bloc states.

It is also unusual because the Soviets rely almost exclusively on the military dimension to define their role in Libya. There are both strategic and economic aspects to the military component, but more significant is the general absence of other conventional tools and techniques of Soviet power and presence. The sparse population and lack of major urban centers greatly inhibit the kind of Soviet behavior common elsewhere in the Third World.

The relationship, in its uniqueness, is nonetheless important to watch. Both nations have particular strengths and special needs. There is reason to believe that in the past year, both parties have been more willing to respond to the other's concerns, although there is not perfect symmetry here; Qaddafi seems to seek greater Soviet military protection but is sore pressed to provide the Soviets with the hard cash they want.

For the West, the relationship is an intriguing one and merits special attention. Neither Libya nor the Soviet Union have

found in the other a panacea for all their problems, and some argue that the achievements of this bilateral bond are indeed modest, although others credit the Soviet-Libyan connection with numerous instances of African instability in the past year. One cannot question that the degree of Soviet military penetration of Libya, the prospects for Qaddafi's radical transformation of Libya into a new form of Islamic Arab society, and the future of Soviet-Libyan energy and economic cooperation are critical concerns for Western policy in the Mediterranean, and in the Arab and African arenas.

The Libyan Context

At independence in 1951, Libya was described in U.N. documents as the poorest nation in the world. The circumstances of its achieving independence, long before many other colonized states with more advanced infrastructure and more abundant resources, including its North African neighbors, pertain to the nascent East-West rivalry of the immediate post-war period. From most accounts, U.S. strategic interest in establishing a major Mediterranean base converged with British political interests. Those two worked for the independence option over the Soviet-¹ backed alternative of placing Libya under a U.N. trusteeship. The Soviets were also interested in developing a Mediterranean presence, and saw in the well-located, sparsely populated Libyan coast an ideal site. When spurned, they concentrated their efforts on Egypt, which was politically more valuable but required considerably more effort.

Upon independence, the pro-Western Sanusi monarchy was installed, somewhat artificially uniting the country's East-West division of Tripoli and Cyrenaica. In September 1969, a 27-year old captain named Qaddafi and seventy young officers, following in the footsteps of their spiritual father, Gamal abd al-Nasser, seized power in a bloodless coup. The well-organized takeover had been planned over a period of years, when these Free Officers grew disillusioned with King Idris' ineffective reforms. The coup was received calmly and without resistance in Libya and abroad. By the end of the first week, Qaddafi emerged as the de facto head of state, defining his task of restructuring Libyan society in terms that recall the attempts to create a Libyan republic in the period 1916-1920.

Since 1969, Qaddafi has experimented with three different political forms. The initial ruling apparatus was modelled after Algeria's Revolutionary Command Council (R.C.C.), designed in theory for informal, collegial decision making among military peers, with no dominant personalities. In addition, he organized an Arab Socialist Union modelled after Egypt's mass party cum social organization. In 1973, dissatisfied with both, Qaddafi abolished the R.C.C. and organized the country into 450 people's committees, establishing the base for his theory outlined in the Green Book of 1976. He called for the transformation of Libya into the original jamaniriya, a coined phrase roughly translated as direct democracy. The Green Book describes a new society that straddles capitalism and Communism, with little institutional structure. For Qaddafi, the ideal goal is a kind of pure popular sovereignty, where "fraudulent forms of democracy" like

parliaments are not necessary. On the foreign policy front, he advocates positive neutralism as the solution for all underdeveloped states, and he begins to formulate his goal of a united Arab Islamic republic, post-Nasser pan-Arabism.

Some sociologists have seen parallels between the Soviet system and the institutional forms of Qaddafi's jamahiriya, comparing the General Popular Committee to the Soviet Cabinet, the General Secretariat to the organism of the same name in the Soviet system, and the Permanent Secretariat to the Politburo.² Part Two of the Green Book outlines "the solution to the economic problem" in terms borrowing heavily from Marxist socialism. Others have seen in the Green Book the contribution of Western³ thinkers like Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

Two points should be noted: 1) Qaddafi's political theories, for all practical purposes, remain theories and have not been implemented or realized to a point where valid comparisons to the Soviet system are possible; and 2) Qaddafi himself gives no credit to outside influences, and presents his theory as indigenous, as emanating from his spiritual experiences in the desert of Libya. Therefore, whether the current structures of the Libyan political system are akin to Soviet political values and institutions may have little bearing on Soviet influence or access to the Libyan polity.

In practice, 'positive neutralism' as a foreign policy has meant considerable contact between Libya and the west. After the takeover of 1969 and the abolition of the monarchy, Qaddafi closed the American and British bases, but continued to seek and

receive military help from the West. The United States provided military aid until 1974. While Qaddafi began purchasing Soviet weapons in 1970, he considered France a more important arms provider than the Soviets until the mid-1970s. A diversified arms supply strategy was more than just practical for Qaddafi; it was a reflection of his independence from any bloc, and therefore was a matter of national security policy.

Over time, he has lost some of that maneuverability, and has grown increasingly oriented to the East for arms supplies, training, and for economic cooperation agreements, although he has sought diversity even within the Eastern bloc, presumably to prevent Soviet domination. The United States began placing restrictions on high technology sales to Libya in the early 1970s because of Qaddafi's support for terrorism and other foreign policies considered contrary to American interests. France, in the context of its Africa policy, has limited its arms trade with Libya, although the Mitterand government is inclined to use arms sale policy as a positive inducement in political relations, and has not ruled out future contracts with the current government.

The reluctance of the West to trade with Qaddafi has gone a step further under the Reagan administration, and the confrontational tone of Libyan-American relations has not only reinforced the trend toward Libyan reliance on the East as exclusive arms source, but may have induced Qaddafi to redefine his security needs and his attitude about great power alliances. In a significant speech on the anniversary of the September 1 Revolution in 1981, Qaddafi proclaimed his willingness to sacrifice his neutralism for a protecting alliance. "We

desperately need to be in military alliance with any ally who⁵ will stand by us against the United States."

Other aspects of Qaddafi's foreign policy activities of the past few years may directly or indirectly enhance Soviet interests in the region. Qaddafi has been rebuffed in his search for political unions with Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, and Chad. But he succeeded, in late 1981, to form an alliance with Ethiopia and South Yemen (PDY) that could be significant in the context of his relations with the Soviet Union. Both of these states are more clearly Soviet clients than Libya, and the prospects to coordinating shipments and transfer of arms within the alliance, which forms an arc around pro-Western Sudan and Egypt, could facilitate Soviet regional planning and give the Soviets indirect⁶ access to Libya via these more compliant states. The presumed Libyan financing of its pact partners also provides considerable benefit for the Soviet Union.

Libyan involvement in international terrorism, through financial support and through training provided in Libya to a broad spectrum of terrorist groups, is another feature of the Libyan landscape of special interest to the Soviet Union. Experts generally concur that while the Soviets may not be responsible for the growth of political terrorism that has plagued mostly Western societies for the past decade, they have benefitted from its destabilizing effects and must at least passively support it. Qaddafi's reputedly unmatched activism in this field is at a minimum an unspoken dimension of the Soviet interest in Libya.

The climate in Libya in 1982 is one of considerable uncertainty. Many believe that Qaddafi's series of radical internal measures have alienated groups that were once among his supporters. Those who continue to back him are the have-nots of Libya, those who did not have a stake in the dismantling of the existing order. Some believe that the severe dislocations caused in the economy by Qaddafi's rulings on banks, private ownership, and income distribution will have serious repercussions for the future stability of the country, even in a post-Qaddafi era. Two military-organized coup attempts have occurred between mid-1981 and mid-1982. The second, in late April 1982, has been cited as the reason for Qaddafi's last minute cancellation of a state visit to Greece. The oil glut and U.S. boycott of high-priced Libyan oil have already created cash flow problems for Libya, and this in turn has made more scarce within the country the consumer goods and manufactured imports on which the population depends. This state of flux is the climate which the Soviet Union must consider when dealing with the present Libyan government and predicting the long-term stability of that regime.

Soviet Objectives

Given the unusual personality of the Libyan state and its leader, the Soviet Union has opted for a limited relationship with the country, and has not sought a high degree of association or involvement in its day-to-day affairs. The Soviets appear reconciled to the sometimes strident stance of non-alignment espoused by Libya, and have been willing to agree to disagree on

philosophical questions when more tangible interests are at stake.

Libya holds a number of attractions for the Soviets. Its 1100 mile Mediterranean coast with a natural port at Tripoli has considerable strategic importance. Its proximity to Egypt, the heart of the Arab world, is significant, as is its location on the Soviets' North-South axis to black Africa. Libya has also been a cash-paying customer of Soviet goods of considerable importance, and has certain political affinities with the Soviet Union.

Western analysts differ dramatically on how to assess Soviet priorities in Libya; some see them as overwhelmingly strategic in nature, while those inclined to take a non-alarmist view of Soviet intentions see the economic aspect of the relationship as equally important. The differences also reflect diverging time perspectives. The economic interests-first group tends to look at the short-run, and point to the already realized dimension of Soviet-Libyan trade as more important than the elusive and continuing military alliance talks. But the strategic camp takes a longer-term view and ascribes considerable patience to the Soviets, who cannot overlook the advantages of close military ties with Libya. For those who see the Soviets as reactive and opportunistic in the Third World, Libya has provoked responses and provided opportunities in a pattern that suggest its increasing importance to the Soviets.

Strategic Objectives: The Soviets cannot overlook Libya's location on the southern flank of the Mediterranean. A Soviet presence there could cause considerable alarm in NATO circles. In addition, Libya is located between two pro-Western states. Both Tunisia and Egypt have expanding military cooperation arrangements with the United States, permit port of call visits and have conducted joint operations. The Soviet desire to monitor or counterbalance that presence is evident.

Libya is also strategically located from the Soviet perspective along a North-South axis, to the degree that its airfields could provide en route access for Soviet actions (interventions, airlifts, etc.) to sub-Saharan states.⁷

Libya's strategic attractiveness to the Soviets has grown principally since Anwar Sadat expelled the Soviets from Egypt in 1972. They had virtually unlimited access there, with tens of thousands of military personnel in residence and near-total control of parts of Alexandria Harbor. Libya cannot compensate for the loss of Egypt, which was devastating militarily and humiliating politically for the Soviets. According to some accounts, Libya was initially seen as a place to store weapons for use by Egypt, should Cairo have decided to return to the Soviet-backed rejectionist camp. But with Egypt deeply committed to American diplomacy, Libya became by the late 1970s an alternative, albeit inferior, and a place from which to pressure Egypt.⁸

The Soviets have reportedly pressed the Libyans for naval and air base rights, but to date, have been more successful in negotiating interim, more modest steps, such as landing rights

and port of call visits. The Soviets have technical advisors in residence (about 1,000), but for financial and political reasons, the Libyans have balanced their numbers with non-Soviet Eastern bloc advisors. A considerable number are presumed to be from Yugoslavia and Romania, suggesting even less control from Moscow than is the case with the East German security and intelligence personnel. Co-production of weapons with Libya or joint exercises with Soviet and Libyan troops do not seem to be high priority goals for the Soviets, as they have become in U.S.-Egyptian military relations.

There has been considerable controversy about whether the Soviets have an understanding with Libya about their use of the Soviet-provided weapons stockpiled in the Libyan desert. Some have seen the estimated \$12 billion spent on arms since 1969, so greatly in excess of Qaddafi's capacity to use them, as a Soviet⁹ cache. But many dispute the usefulness of these weapons because of deterioration in desert conditions, and the likelihood that Qaddafi would have accepted encumbering restrictions in purchasing the arms.

On the other hand, it is not beyond the imagination to contemplate circumstances under which Soviet-Libyan military cooperation could occur, involving the use of the Soviet-supplied equipment beyond Libya's borders. Soviets were reported alongside Libyans during their Chad intervention (December 1980 to November 1981), although only to repair and maintain equipment operated by Libyans. But other scenarios for this kind of complementary use of the Soviet supplied arms are plausible, particularly if the

current signs of Qaddafi altering his ideological position to permit closer identification with the Soviet Union prove accurate. In sum, the use of the Libyan purchased weaponry can be arranged on an ad hoc basis, and written agreements about such use may not prove necessary.

Political: Soviet political objectives in Libya are based on a vague ideological affinity that underscores the anti-imperialist, anti-Zionist, anti-capitalist rhetoric of Col. Qaddafi. They do not appear aimed at forging a more intimate political alliance, or at portraying Libya as a close protege or client of Moscow. This was demonstrated in the Soviet leader's remarks on the occasion of Qaddafi's last state visit to Moscow in April 1981: "...Our states differ largely from each other. There are also certain differences of ideological nature between us..."¹⁰

Moscow's reluctance to deepen the political association with Libya may reflect concern about Qaddafi's mixed reputation in the Third World, anxieties about his Islamic ideas spreading interest among the Soviet Muslim population, and a demonstrated willingness to accord non-aligned countries a degree of rhetorical independence. In the same Kremlin speech, Brezhnev outlined the code of behavior observed by the Soviet Union in its dealings with "the young states of the three continents" and included "respect for the status of non-alignment chosen by the majority of African, Asian and Latin American states. Renunciation of the attempts to draw them into military political blocs of big powers."¹¹ Some analysts think that this attitude best serves Soviet political objectives by permitting them to

draw a stark comparison between the entangling alliances of the Western states with their Third World friends and the Soviet approach.

The disassociation between the Soviets and Libya, however, seems to betray past strains and problems in the relationship. The Soviets may have felt thwarted in past attempts to move closer to Libya, and are opting for a more distanced posture. Another source of strain has been Libyan criticism of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. After abstaining on early U.N. votes condemning the Soviets, Libya has become more outspoken in support of the struggle of the Afghan people, and Qaddafi in Moscow referred to the need to ensure the independence and neutrality of Afghanistan. The Soviets, in contrast, were supportive of the Libyan intervention in Chad, and have called the Libyan action "a decisive factor in the restoration of peace in Chad."¹³

On a day-to-day basis, there is ample room for vague statements of ideological affinity (opposition to Camp David, support for liberation movements, etc) that do not entail close coordination or sophisticated joint policy formulation. On a large number of issues debated in the United Nations and in regional fora, the Soviet Union can be reasonably certain that the Libyans will work for positions and decisions compatible with Soviet interests.

It is not clear whether they have the leverage to alter Libyan positions on questions that may have long-term implications for the Soviet Union and where Libyan and Soviet

political objectives may not coincide. An interesting example of this is the question of the Western Sahara and Libyan support for the Polisario. The Soviets have been noticeably quiet on the war, presumably trying to avoid jeopardizing important economic ties with Morocco, and viewing the conflict as a localized problem. Prospects for a negotiated solution to the problem are now bogged down in Organization of African Unity (OAU) in-fighting, not in small measure created by Libya and its upcoming chairmanship of that organization. At this point, and at other watersheds in the war and its resolution efforts, one can easily imagine diverging Soviet and Libyan perspectives. The Libyans have been highly identified with the Polisario and may consider the political price of making concessions for peace too dear, whereas the Soviets, looking at other regional dynamics, may make a different calculation. What remains for further analysis is how much the Soviets, in the context of their political relationship with Libya, could influence Libyan policy on this or other issues.

Libyan support for terrorism is another murky realm in which Soviet interests may be served, but where the Soviets may be more passive beneficiaries than active agents of influence with decision making power. Some, however, believe that over time, the Libyans and Soviets have learned to cooperate well in the training of disparate groups of terrorists whose targets include major European states as well as Israel and conservative Arab governments.¹⁴ Soviet-Libyan cooperation also includes the seemingly more benign activity of setting up seminars and political conferences to bring together leftists of various nationalities to discuss the common struggle.¹⁵

Economic: For many who see the Soviet connection to Libya plagued with a number of problems, only the economic relationship can be explained in clear terms. The Soviets have found in Libya, perhaps more than any other Third World state, a highly valuable trading partner. The arms for dollars trade has provided the Soviets with important amounts of foreign exchange needed for their own balance of payments purposes.

Libya has not been an important source of oil for the Soviets, but those who predict that the Soviet Union may be a net importer of oil in the 1990s see Libya as a logical and likely outside source. The prospect of an arms-for-oil barter arrangement seems more plausible now than in the mid-1970s, because Libyan cash reserves are reportedly dangerously low, its oil output reduced by 60 percent since 1981, its reserves down from a high of \$14 billion to \$9 billion. The Soviets might be interested in pursuing such a barter deal for their Eastern European clients, which is indirectly of economic benefit to them, although presumably still less desirable than cash payments.

Libya is also the site of a large contingent of Soviet and Eastern bloc economic technicians, who perform in both training and advisory capacities and number over 24,000.¹⁶ Many of the Soviets fill the need for cadres in the civil service, comparable to French cooperants. Soviet technicians are also more highly priced than the East European counterparts, and the Libyans have consequently lowered the ratio of Soviet to non-Soviet economic personnel.

Measuring Soviet Success

Assessing Soviet achievements and setbacks in Libya over the past decade is best measured according to one's particular perception of their objectives. Nevertheless, there is ample evidence to document in a neutral fashion the real and recent growth of Soviet exposure to Libya. In the military field, the ties have grown qualitatively and quantitatively, and are likely to expand more in the near future. In political terms, the relationship remains more or less constant within its specific limitations, while in economic terms, some deterioration of the Soviet objective has occurred with the dramatic decline of Libyan oil sales in recent months, but may be restored with new adjustments in the world oil market.

Strategic Achievements: A major breakthrough for the Soviets occurred in July 1981 when Libya granted port visiting rights for the first time since the 1969 Revolution. It has been reported that several follow-port calls have taken place, and thus the Soviets have quietly normalized an important aspect of their naval presence in the Mediterranean. Similar rights to Libya's airfields have not been granted, according to information available on the public record.

There has also been progress toward the achievement of a Soviet-Libyan Friendship and Cooperation Treaty along the lines of the Soviet-Syrian treaty. Although no date has been suggested, many analysts believe the treaty could be realized in the coming year. Such an event may be contingent upon Qaddafi's perception

of the threat from the West, notably the United States. One measure of this positive trend is Qaddafi's remarks to a German journalist: "...in its present situation facing the enemy, Syria had the right to establish such an alliance and conclude such a treaty. Syria is not the only country to do so....We too might find it necessary for us to conclude such a treaty."¹⁷

Developing Libyan conventional military capabilities for its own national defense and as a deterrent against Egypt and other regional rivals has also met with considerable success in the past decade, both in terms of accumulating advanced weaponry and training personnel. The intervention and airlift into Chad, while not providing combat experience, proved considerably more effective than Libya's past adventures beyond its borders, and drew many analysts to the conclusion that Libyan military capabilities have improved. The short border confrontation between Egypt and Libya in 1977 is the other major measure of enhanced conventional capabilities of the Libyan state.

A few essential features of the current scope of Libyan military capabilities, which in large measure can be considered a Soviet contribution, include:

- The Armed Forces of 55,000 have one of the highest ratios of military equipment to manpower in the world.¹⁸
- It is estimated that Libya has spent \$12 billion on defense since 1969.
- The Air Force consists of four squadrons of MIG-23s, MIG-25s and Mirages. Libya has been among the first non-

Warsaw Pact countries to receive the most advanced of the MIG line.

- Libya's arsenal of missiles is diverse, including British, French and Soviet equipment. Reports that Libya contracted with a West German firm for medium-range missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads were denied by the company, OSTRAG, in late 1981.
- Libya has over 2500 tanks, including the Soviet T-55s, T-62s, and T-72s.
- Several thousand Libyan officers have been sent to the Soviet Union for training.
- The Air Force remains dependent on foreign pilots, including Pakistanis, Palestinians, and Soviets.¹⁹ North Korea withdrew a group of its pilots in early 1980.
- There are reports that the Soviets are helping Libya construct a major naval facility in the eastern part of the country.
- Libya's domestic manufacturing capability remains limited; Libya exported an estimated \$35 million in defense articles for the period 1974-78.²⁰
- There have been reports of Libyan interest in setting up co-production facilities with Turkey, as well as a MIG assembly plant in the country.
- There are an estimated 1800 Soviet and Eastern bloc military advisors in residence in Libya.²¹

The trends clearly demonstrate that the military component has proven to be an effective instrument of Soviet influence in Libya, and has succeeded in achieving one strategic objective by

making Qaddafi a force that Egypt, Sudan, Tunisia and other regional states must reckon with in their defense planning. But French and Italian sales as well as Qaddafi's wariness have prevented the Soviets from achieving total domination of the Libyan market. There is also no clear indication of what understanding the Soviets have with Libya about the cooperative use of the Libyan arsenal.

Economic Achievements: The Soviets have found in Libya an important trading partner, and have benefitted enormously from an ironic triangular relationship: major Western powers, including the United States, have been paying in dollars for high-grade Libyan oil. Libya in turn has purchased Soviet arms, and paid for them in dollars, which the Soviets have used for balance of payment purposes. The Soviets may have received as much as \$10 billion since 1969 in this way, approximately the level of U.S. arms agreements to Iran 1973-77, and roughly one-fourth the total value of U.S. arms agreements to Saudi Arabia since 1975.

In addition, the Soviets are paid for providing technical and advisory services to Libya, both military and non-military, and for other high technology items. In the nuclear field, the Soviets offered Libya a research facility in 1975, a power plant in 1978, and a power station in 1981. Of these, only the research facility is presumed to be under construction, and the financial details of the project are not available on the public record.²² The small Libyan population (under three million) makes it an

unlikely market of significant proportions for Soviet manufactured goods.

At present, it appears that there is not significant room for growth in the Soviet-Libyan economic relationship. With current world oil market conditions and the state of Libya's liquidity, transactions on a cash basis are less likely than before, and may inhibit Soviet trade plans of both a military and commercial nature. After the last summit between Libyan and Soviet leaders in April 1981, a cooperation agreement pertaining to oil, gas, non-ferrous metals and irrigation was signed. Again,²³ its financial dimensions were not disclosed.

Political Achievements: If one accepts the premise that Soviet political objectives in Libya are modest and are not aimed at creating a Libyan society modelled after the Soviet Union, then the achievements should be measured by examining the coincidence of Soviet and Libyan views on major world issues. There is a general identity of the positions of the two states on foreign policy questions in the short-run: U.S. policies in the Middle East, continued resistance to negotiated peace with Israel, Egyptian-American joint military exercises, etc. But many consider the political "affinity" unnatural and not based on any profoundly held convictions. For John Campbell, Soviet political in Libya "is a pure gamble, for any resemblance between Soviet aims and the consequences of Qaddafi's foreign policy is coincidental."²⁴

Qaddafi's chairmanship of the OAU in 1982-83 may provide the Soviets with certain political benefits in Africa, as compared to

a more Western-oriented state in the chair. But the question of the Western Sahara has split that organization into moderate and radical camps, and Qaddafi's ability to polarize regional groups may limit the political gains for the Soviet Union in having one of its closer African partners directing the debates in the coming months.

There is no indication that the Soviets have succeeded in altering Qaddafi's political thinking vis-a-vis Islam and Arabism as bases of a future unified Arab Islamic state, or that they consider his stated goal desirable. But while considerable ideological distance remains on long-term political objectives, their ability to agree to disagree on important issues has improved. Ironically, a case can be made that the main political achievement of the Soviet Union in Libya in the past five years has been to become reconciled in the likelihood that no greater political affinity can be achieved with the present Libyan regime. The record indicates that in the early years of Soviet approaches to Libya, the political expectations were higher and the disappointments greater. The Qaddafi visit to Moscow in 1981 suggests a political disassociation that can also be viewed as a maturing of the political relationship into something more realistic.

Constraints on Soviet Policy

There are three major constraints on the Soviets finding in Libya a receptive partner in economic, military, and political

arenas as well as effective agent at promoting pro-Soviet policies and practices in the Arab and African worlds.

Ideology, both political and religious, is a major obstacle. Libya and the Soviet Union do not view the world in the same way. Qaddafi finds the Communist model as abhorrent as the capitalist, although socialism and collectivism are integral parts of his social ideal. His 1981 decision to ban free enterprise from the ideas contained in the Green Book, Part Two, indicate considerable sympathy for and attachment to Marxist economic theory, but the Soviet experience does not seem to provide answers for his restructuring of Libyan society, and its atheism is abhorrent to him.

Islam is a central aspect of Qaddafi's experience, and he has mobilized religion in a more dynamic and fundamental way into his political thinking than have other Arab revolutionaries, who have used Islam more as a slogan than an operational set of principles and values. For Qaddafi, Islam does provide some important answers to how society and state should function, and he has even attempted to spread Islam in Africa through conversions of African leaders. For the Soviets, this is anathema. It runs contrary to the profoundly secular nature of their system, and touches a sensitive nerve because of the large number of Soviet citizens who are Muslim. This divergence between the Soviet and Libyan perspectives cannot be resolved.

The second major constraint is Qaddafi's reputation. The Soviets have to assess whether identification with one of the most controversial figures on the world political scene today is too costly for them. This would be a major consideration in the

event a heavy commitment through a long-term friendship treaty were consummated. Qaddafi's image as a maverick might cause the Soviet some loss of prestige among countries that are non-aligned and that might be prospective Soviet treaty partners.

Because of what some consider Qaddafi's penchant for unpredictability, the Soviets also risk investing in Libya and losing control over their investment. Their experience in Egypt under Sadat, being abruptly expelled from a country in which their presence was extensive, by a strongly independent nationalist leader, may give them pause. Qaddafi could turn his back on the Soviets, causing economic and strategic dislocations for them, and could conceivably use Soviet-supplied arms in situations where other Soviet interests could be jeopardized. While there is nothing to date to lend credence to the notion Qaddafi might cut ties with the Soviets, his past behavior may make Soviet planners cautious about the degree of involvement.

The third major constraint is the nature and size of the Libyan polity. This constraint is operational for the more conventional kind of Soviet penetration strategy. Libya does not provide the standard vehicles for the Soviets to subvert the political views and attitudes of the Libyan population. The small press establishment is strictly censored and functions as a government agency, there is no trade union movement in the traditional sense, and the current government structure of people's committees and congresses cannot be compared in a useful way to classic political party organization. There has never been a Communist party in Libya, and the grounds on which it might

have taken root have been pre-empted by Qaddafi's efforts to
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radically transform the state.

Soviet-Libyan Relations in a Post-Qaddafi Era

Predictions about the prospects for a change in Libyan leadership in the not too distant future have grown more frequent and more fervent in the past twelve months. Col. Qaddafi's abrupt cancellation of a planned trip to Greece in late April 1962 fueled these fires. Some analysts have concluded from the increasing number of dissident groups abroad and from the presumed feelings of grievance and disillusionment among Libyans subjected to extreme economic disruptions that Qaddafi's demise may be imminent. Yet others point out that his East German security apparatus has served him well in the past, and his concerns for his own personal safety may prevent him from exposing himself to risks. Some analysts also believe that when a change occurs, it may be a more random event, more comparable to Sadat's assassination than a well-organized uprising. The considerable speculation about the survivability of Qaddafi's regime warrants taking a look at such an event's consequences for the Soviet Union.

At present, the Soviet Union is presumed to be firmly supporting Qaddafi and not actively involved with any of the organized dissident groups. The large Libyan community in Italy, in England, and in other Western capitals is comprised of many who left Libya when King Idris was deposed. They are persons whose economic fortunes were adversely affected by the Colonel's

coup, and whose general background, it is presumed, would favor restoration of a free market economy.

Another major opposition figure is Dr. Mohammed Yusuf Maqaryif, whose remarks to a Saudi newspaper in March 1982 show that some opponents of Qadhafi strongly believe that Libya's future will be in the forefront of Arab and Islamic solidarity. Organized into the Libyan National Front and based in other Arab countries, they criticize Qaddafi for having been a divisive rather than unifying factor in the struggle for the Palestinian cause. A post-Qaddafi Libya, for them, could heal the wounds Qaddafi has caused in the Arab, African, and Islamic worlds.²⁷

If Libya enters into a period of turmoil, with different factions jockeying for leadership, the Soviets may well find the second group relatively more attractive, although there may not be any greater ideological affinity than with the present regime. The Soviets may become convinced that Qaddafi is no longer a viable figure, and may try to affect the outcome of such a power struggle in its early stages. It does not appear that any current group of dissidents would present the Soviets with a radically improved position in Libya; more likely would be a continuation of current conditions, if not a slight deterioration.

The prospects for a very activist Soviet response to Libyan instability, comparable to Afghanistan, seem implausible. The Soviets have not demonstrated to date that they consider Libya of a comparable degree of strategic value, and the chances for European and American opposition are great. While the United States is no longer critically involved in the Libyan economy, the proximity to Egypt, a close ally of the United States, NATO

considerations, and the prospects of a strong European reaction should inhibit such a Soviet approach.

Conclusion

Soviet-Libyan ties continue, on the balance, to be of mutual benefit. Until recently, one could argue that the Libyans were able to use the Soviet Union without compromising their political or ideological integrity, while the Soviets were receiving somewhat less than they sought. The balance may be shifting, with greater Libyan dependence on the Soviet Union militarily, as European states restrict arms trade, and psychologically, with American-Egyptian military cooperation and current U.S. policy toward Libya causing considerable alarm in Tripoli. One can imagine the two states growing closer on the military front, with expanded Soviet access to Libyan facilities and a possible long-term friendship treaty.

At the same time, the political association between the two states remains limited, sometimes strained, and unlikely to change. Qaddafi has moderately altered his stance on alignment to rationalize Soviet protection, but has acquired new confidence and independence through his role in Chad, his anticipated OAU leadership, treaty with Ethiopia and PDRY, support for Iran, and continued leadership of the anti-Camp David radical Arab states. While any or all of these positions may coincide with current Soviet objectives, they contain regional and Islamic dynamics that may not always be of use to Soviet policy interests.

The economic state of affairs, over time of great benefit to the Soviet Union and its need for foreign exchange, appears to be in a state of decline. Whether Libya will continue to be a customer of various Soviet products on a significant scale will be determined by its pricing decisions and conditions in the world oil market. Opportunities in the nuclear technology field, potentially lucrative for the Soviets, have not been pursued actively in Libya. The long-term Soviet economic interests in Libya may not exceed its current dimensions.

Ultimately, the assessment of what the Soviets have achieved, what they have sought to achieve, and what they will seek in the future is a subjective judgment. The Soviet position, as measured in concrete terms and physical manifestations, has improved remarkably in the years since Col. Qaddafi came to power. The relationship with Libya, however lucrative, is not an adequate strategic substitute for Egypt, and clearly contains many pitfalls.

If one believes that Soviet policy in the Third World is reactive and opportunistic, then the Soviets are currently in a phase when they should be responding actively to new Libyan needs for security and protection. A Libya threatened by the West and leading the progressive consensus of Africa may provide some excellent opportunities in the near future.

The Soviets should remain interested in Libya regardless of its government, and may not choose to get involved in the succession question. They have a foothold in a critically located state that at least in part fills their needs vis-a-vis NATO and Egypt. The current state of affairs for the Soviet Union could be

the foundation of an expanded presence, essentially military in character, if circumstances permit and if the powers in Moscow deem it desirable.

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Getting A Grip On The Horn

The Emergence of the Soviet Presence and Future Prospects

By Paul B. Henze

Historical Roots

Russian strategic concern about the Horn of Africa has much deeper roots than that of the United States, which is almost entirely a post-World War II development. Russians became¹ curious about Ethiopia as far back as the 17th century. Curiosity was abetted by the appeal of an exotic, distant land inhabited by Orthodox Christians. In the mid-19th century, a dedicated Russian monk, Porfiry Uspensky, who cultivated friendships with Ethiopian clerics during several years of service in Jerusalem, wrote enthusiastically and at length about the possibilities which the ancient Christian kingdom offered the Tsarist empire as a base for expanding influence throughout Africa. The Imperial Russian Geographical Society had already sent the Kovalevsky expedition to Ethiopia in 1847 to look for² the sources of the Nile.

Some Ethiopians were aware of Russia too. In the 1850's Emperor Tewodros sought support from the tsar for a project to liberate Jerusalem from the Turks. The Russians demurred but in

the last quarter of the 19th century they became more adventuresome. After the Suez Canal was opened, they felt the need to secure their sea route through the Indian Ocean to the Far East. Rivalry with the British in Central Asia -- the Great Game was beginning to be played in earnest -- stimulated Russian ambitions for a foothold in the Horn.

There were numerous initiatives in the 1880's and 1890's. An attempt to set up a Russian colony on the Bay of Tajura (in what is now the Djibouti Republic) ended in failure, but Russian missions to Ethiopia which followed established close relations with Emperor Menelik's court.³ This great emperor, then in his prime, was feeling Italian pressure and uncertainty about the British. He was eager to find European allies and warmly welcomed the Mashkov delegation in 1889 as "military representatives of my brother, the Negus of Muscovy." Other Russians followed -- military men, church representatives and diplomats. Military aid and technical assistance were provided. These activities have never been fully studied, but one of the most recent scholars to investigate them concludes that the role of Russian advice in the great Ethiopian victory over the Italians at Adowa in 1896 may be much greater than was realized at the time.⁴

Russians continued to be prominent among Menelik's advisers into the early 20th century. Russian officers helped Menelik's armies consolidate control over the country's southwestern regions. Russians led the Ethiopian expedition to the Nile which preceded the Fashoda crisis of 1895.⁵ The Russians built and

staffed a hospital in Addis Ababa which operated for several years. Church links were cultivated but came to little.

After the 1905 Revolution the Tsarist government was beset by mounting problems at home and interest in the Horn of Africa waned. Several dozen Tsarist officers found refuge in Ethiopia after 1917, but the country attracted no attention from the Soviet government until the 1930's, when it became the center of international diplomatic concern as the Italians prepared to invade. The Soviets, characteristically, played an equivocal role during this period -- actually supplying Italy with a good share of the grain and oil she needed to pursue the war against Ethiopia, but in the end refusing, like the United States, to recognize the Italian conquest. This put the Russians in a position to claim to be special friends of Ethiopia after it was liberated and Haile Selassie restored to power in 1941, through the war in East Africa was over several weeks before the U.S.S.R.⁶ was brought into it by Nazi attack.

History had not been forgotten. The groundwork for resumption of Russian involvement in the Horn was laid with the establishment of a Soviet embassy in Addis Ababa in 1943. The U.S.S.R.'s first post-World War II foreign aid project followed in 1946: a "reopened" Russian hospital, declared to be a continuation of the one established in Menelik's time. This was a remarkable example of humanitarianism on the part of a country which itself lay devastated by the German invasion and five years of fighting. Like its predecessor at the turn of the century, the new Russian hospital in Addis Ababa did not acquire much status as a medical establishment but came to be regarded as

primarily of political significance.

They saw clearly the advantages of getting a grip on the Horn in the period immediately following World War II, but opportunities were limited and so were their resources. One long shot was to try to get some degree of hold over Eritrea, as the former Italian colony, under British administration after 1941, came onto the U.N. agenda. Haile Selassie wanted Eritrea rejoined to Ethiopia. Western strategic interests made that highly desirable. The Russians played a part in the U.N. effort to dispose of former Italian colonies, but their first priority was Libya. The story of the diplomatic maneuvers that led to independence for Libya, an Italian trusteeship for Somalia with firm commitment to early independence, and federation of Eritrea with Ethiopia is too complicated to recount here, but it is worthwhile reflecting on the fact that as we look back over the subsequent history of each of these colonies thirty years later, we find that the Soviets have played (or still play) a major role in all of them. This demonstrates how persistent Soviet interest in this part of the world has been and how they have persevered in seizing opportunities to expand influence.

For more than a decade Libya has been a major Soviet ally and, moreover, almost unique in that it is financially profitable for the Russians, unlike most of the other allies they have acquired. Long a major channel for destabilization of Ethiopia by support of the Eritrean insurgency, Libya after 1976 became an enthusiastic supporter of the Soviet-leaning Ethiopian

revolutionary government. It appears to be easing the Soviet economic burden now by providing some financial aid to Ethiopia.

For nearly a decade and a half, when they could not do better, the Russians tacitly encouraged Somali irredentism by pouring arms into the country and thereby building a position of military strength for themselves in the region. Open Somali attack on Ethiopia in 1977 saw the Russians in a no-lose situation. If the attack had succeeded the Russians would have dominated both countries and thus played a decisive role in restructuring a truncated Ethiopia shorn of the territories claimed by Somalia and, perhaps, of Eritrea as well.⁷ If the Somali assault on Ethiopia failed, the Russians had the option of changing sides and gaining the greater prize they had long sought, Ethiopia, in the framework of a rescue operation. It is difficult to imagine that the Kremlin leadership envisioned such a disorderly process, and a price so high, as was the case.

Some observers have seen events in the Horn during the latter half of the 1970's as the crowning phase of a Soviet master plan that had been devised in the final days of World War II and systematically implemented ever since. Others see them as the outcome of deeper processes in Russian history that can be traced back to the 1890's, or perhaps even the 1850's. History is relevant, but as much as they talk about historical inevitability, Communists are taught not to rely on history to produce the results they desire. The only master plan that can be discerned in the Soviet approach to the Horn during the past 30 years is persistent, aggressive opportunism: a steady recognition of the strategic importance of the region and a

determination to expand influence in it by whatever action is likely to be effective when openings develop. The Soviet approach involves: 1) a preparedness to act; 2) a predisposition to advance its power interests without ideological restraint; and 3) a steadiness of ultimate purpose. But at the same time caution has always played an important role, as became evident in the period following the advent of the Revolutionary government⁸ to power in Ethiopia.

Successes in the Horn have not come cheap for the Russians and expansion of influence has brought broadened responsibilities and greatly increased demands on resources. It remains to be seen how severe the strains which these generate will be for the Soviet system. How they will respond to increasing costs and strains in the Horn cannot be determined by judgments that apply only to this region. All these power equations have many variables. Future Russian decisions on the Horn will be made in the context of competing demands and strains in other areas where the U.S.S.R. is heavily committed: Cuba, Poland and elsewhere in Eastern Europe, Afghanistan. Just as in the late 19th century, what happens in the Horn has a relationship to the Great Game in Asia. Before we examine looming challenges and choices which the Soviets must face in the Horn, let us examine in greater detail how they operated in the 1960's and 1970's.

Making the Most of the Least

The Soviets had to content themselves with a lean situation in the Horn during the 1950's. Only Ethiopia was independent. The 25-year U.S.-Ethiopian mutual defense agreement of 1953

formalized the evolution Ethiopia had already made toward the Free World defense system. Haile Selassie had demonstrated his commitment to the concept of collective security by significant participation in U.N. forces in Korea.

The Soviets maintained an embassy and built a large cultural center in Addis Ababa, cultivated relations with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and did some scholarly research on Ethiopia, but there was no opportunity for any major initiative. Until Sudan (1956), Somalia (1960) and Kenya (1962) became independent, there was no basis for Soviet presence in these countries. Only Sudan had a native Communist movement, the Sudan Communist Party (SCP), founded among Sudanese students in Cairo in 1945. Illegal both before and after independence, it offered little scope for Soviet initiative. Essentially the 1950's were a time of modest but steady investment for the future and the Russians had to bide their time.

Things began to change in 1959 when the Russians realized the advantages of economic aid. Haile Selassie was invited to Moscow and came back with a \$100 million credit. Economic assistance became an important instrument of Soviet policy in the Horn in the 1960's, though the publicity about it always exceeded the services or goods delivered. A Russian vocational training institute was opened in the provincial Ethiopian town of Bahr Dar in 1962 and work got under way on a petroleum refinery. An obsolescent facility which had originally been taken out of Romania in 1944 and set up at Baku was generously donated to Ethiopia and went into operation at the southern Eritrean port of Assab in 1967.

The Soviets lost no time in getting economic aid programs under way in Somalia and Kenya, undertaking a port expansion survey of Berbera in 1962. Soviet aid to Kenya included a political training institute which opened in late 1964 but was closed after six months when an anti-Kenyatta plot was discovered among the students. Only slightly less blatantly political was another Soviet priority for the hospital also fell and it was actually not completed until 1973. Meanwhile Kenyans had become alarmed by Soviet arming of Somalia and the Russians wasted no further economic aid on Kenya, whose free-market approach to economic development had attracted a steady flow of foreign investment from America and Europe.

Somalia needed economic development more urgently than any other Horn country and both the Soviets and the West vied for projects.⁹ Few developed very promisingly. Politically Somalis were obsessed with gaining their "lost" territories -- Djibouti, the Ethiopian Ogaden and the N.E. Frontier Province of Kenya. They developed plans for a strong military establishment which no Western nation was willing to support. This gave the Russians a welcome opportunity to move into the Horn militarily. They acted quickly, providing Somalia with arms worth \$30 million in 1964 and 1965, a level which even at that time exceeded average annual American military aid to Ethiopia.

A parliamentary democratic system nevertheless produced pro-Western elected governments in Somalia until the fall of 1969, when a coup by Mohammed Siad Barre, then chief of the armed forces, brought a pro-Soviet revolutionary socialist regime to

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power. The Russians were pleased and showed their pleasure by launching a massive build-up of both military and security forces. Competition with the Chinese Communists gave them additional incentive.

Soviet military aid, which had been at modest levels in the late 1960's, increased rapidly in the 1970's. Somalia's armed forces had already expanded from 4000 men in 1961 to 20,000 by 1970. On a per capita basis, Somalia already had nearly five times as much manpower under arms as Ethiopia did and in absolute terms, her army was four times as large as Kenya's.¹¹ Since Somalia was threatened by none of its neighbors and had no serious internal security problems, expansion of its armed forces had to be a direct function of its irredentist ambitions. The Soviets could have had no illusions about this. Nevertheless they poured more than \$400 million worth of arms into Somalia during the eight years of their relationship as principal supporters of Siad Barre's regime. During the final part of this period, Soviet advisers in Somalia, military and civilian, rose to 4000. There were several hundred Cubans and East Europeans in addition. Economic aid played a minor role in the Soviet build-up in Somalia and pressure for large-scale Russian help did not develop because Somalia continued to attract Western and multilateral aid and after 1973 began to receive Arab assistance.¹² Available statistics indicate that per capita GNP in Somalia declined during the decade 1969-78 from \$136 to \$127.¹³

Somalia was not the only recipient of major Soviet investment in the Horn region in the period. There was a briefer

time of high adventure in Sudan which started when Colonel Jaafar Nimeiry seized power in the spring of 1969. He looked like a classic Arab radical military man: anti-Western, talking socialism and eager to be embraced from the East, he sought the co-operation of the Sudanese Communists. The Soviets responded quickly, rushed in advisers and large quantities of military aid. At a time when Arab/Black African feelings were strained and the Russians had equities to protect with both groups, they opted for support of the northern Sudanese, who were Muslims and Arabs, in the war against the Black Christian southerners. This war had taken on a semi-genocidal character even before the Soviets got into it. Their military support brutalized and broadened it. In the end, however, it was not the southern rebellion but the presence of a native Communist movement in Sudan which proved to
14
the Russians' undoing.

In the summer of 1971 the Sudanese Communists came within a hair's breadth of ousting Nimeiry. It is still not known whether
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the Soviets knew of, or abetted this plot beforehand. It proved enlightening for Nimeiry, for he decided to disengage from the Soviet embrace. He sought Haile Selassie's help in mediating a settlement with the southerners. Ethiopian good offices were effective. By the summer of 1972 the reconciliation process was largely complete and Nimeiry reorganized his government to give the southerners real participation in Khartoum and autonomy in their own region. The Russians had delivered more than \$60 million worth of military aid to Sudan during this two-year period. It was difficult for them to give up so promising an

opening and Nimeiry could find no other arms source, so some deliveries continued after 1972. Following the 1973 Egyptian-Israeli war, Sudan's reorientation toward the West accelerated. Periodic Qaddafi plots against Nimeiry, which the latter suspected of being Soviet-encouraged, and Egyptian influence, as Sadat broke with the Russians, encouraged the process.

The Russians had not forgotten that Ethiopia was the most important country in the Horn, but they lagged in competition with the West during the 1960's. This did not deter them from maintaining a large embassy and training a sizable group of young officers in Amharic. But Communism had little appeal to young Ethiopians, who took scholarships for study in the U.S.S.R. only if they could not qualify for the U.S. Peace Corps had more volunteers in Ethiopia than in any other single country. Most of them were teaching in secondary schools, by far outdistancing any comparable influence the Russians might hope to exercise.

Haile Selassie had recovered rapidly from the coup attempt of December 1960 and consolidated his leadership of the country during the remainder of the decade. ¹⁶ A modest but steady level of U.S. military aid was a key factor in modernization of Ethiopia's 45,000-man armed forces, judged the best in Africa at the time. Russian economic aid was eclipsed by dozens of American, European, Israeli and international projects. Ethiopia, in contrast to Somalia, made good use of economic aid. Modernization was advancing as rapidly in Ethiopia as most thoughtful observers, Ethiopians and foreigners alike, considered desirable in view of the strains the process could (and

occasionally did) cause in a country so steeped in tradition and exhibiting so many regional differences.

One of the most significant changes during the 1960's was the entry into government service and public life of thousands of young men and women with modern education. At the upper end of the spectrum these included several dozen men with advanced U.S. and European university degrees who rapidly rose to sub-ministerial and ministerial rank in major government departments. At intermediate levels thousands of new graduates of the Ethiopian university system staffed ministries, development projects and the rapidly expanding school system. All these people provided the basis for more effective governmental performance during a period when expectations were rising rapidly, but they also represented a source of discontent and frustration when modernization did not proceed as rapidly as they expected.

While maintaining a solid facade of good formal relations and respect for Haile Selassie, the Russians had their sights on a future period of ferment in Ethiopia which from the vantage point of the 1960's must have seemed even to them much farther ahead than it turned out to be.¹⁷ But patience and persistence have always been the hallmarks of Russian foreign operations. They did their best to hasten the advent of basic change. The Soviet agenda for gaining greater influence in (and/or on) Ethiopia had three aspects:

- (a) the first and most expensive was support of Somalia as an eventual avenue of pressure on -- or even dismemberment of -- Ethiopia. The other two were:

- (b) encouragement of Eritrean rebellion, and
- (c) development of an internal radical movement, based primarily on students.

Eritrean separatism, which includes many disparate currents, had no original leftist orientation and seems to have been judged by Moscow as having low potential until the late 1960's.¹⁸ There are, it is true, indications of a few East European arms and funds finding their way into Eritrean hands in the mid-1960's, but it was only in the wake of the wave of anti-Western feeling that engulfed the Arab world after the 1967 defeat that Eritrean insurgency appears to have risen from a low position on Moscow's priority list. By this time the Chinese had become interested in Eritreans, took some to China for training and began sending aid through South Yemen. During the 1967-69 period, arms and money flowed in from Eastern Europe through radical Arab governments and young Eritreans found opportunities to train in several countries with close ties to the Soviets: Syria, Iraq, North Korea, Cuba. There is little evidence of training in the U.S.S.R. The Russians kept their distance until Qaddafi came to power in Libya and Nimeiry in Sudan.

The presence of a pro-Soviet government in Khartoum opened up support possibilities for the Eritrean insurgents which had hitherto been inconceivable. During 1969 emphasis shifted from assassinations, raids, kidnappings and aircraft hijackings to serious military operations as weapons and supplies poured in across the Sudanese border and the insurgents were able to use Sudan as a safe haven. The total amount of support Eritreans

received during this period is unknowable with any exactitude, and not all of it can be charged to the Soviet or Chinese accounts, since some Arabs (e.g. Qaddafi) had resources of their own. Sudan, however, did not, and neither did poverty-stricken South Yemen, which became a major funnel for both Soviet and Chinese assistance.

The Eritrean insurgency was not as immediately destabilizing for Ethiopia as those who underwrote it must have hoped and, curiously enough, it was not targeted directly against the U.S. presence in Eritrea, the complex of sites which constituted ¹⁹ Kagnaw Station. Nevertheless by 1970 half of Ethiopia's military manpower was tied down trying to keep ports and communications lines open and the central government's authority in several rural areas was seriously challenged. Conditions favoring expansion of insurgency in Eritrea reversed again in 1971/1972. Nimeiry's shift from the Soviet embrace and enlistment of Ethiopia as mediator with the southern Sudanese brought a sharp reduction in Sudanese toleration of Eritrean support operations. At the same time Haile Selassie was able to secure from Peking a commitment to abandoning support for the Eritreans in return for recognition and acceptance of Chinese assistance for Ethiopia itself. With help from Israeli counterinsurgency experts, Ethiopia was able to bring insurgent advances to a standstill and regain ground in Eritrea during 1972. Qaddafi and the South Yemenis, as well as the Syrians and Iraqis, continued to support the Eritrean rebels and served as channels for Soviet and East European assistance. Cuba continued

its support too, and was of course completely dependent upon the
Russians for the weapons and funds that were required.²⁰

An avowedly Marxist group, with more Christians than Muslims in its leadership, split off from the Eritrean Liberation Front in 1970 and since this time various leftist currents have been an important aspect of Eritrean separatist politics. The net result of being linked to an international leftist ideology has been to encourage factionalism in an always divided movement.

The Eritrean rebellion, which continues to bedevil Ethiopia's revolutionary leadership, is a fascinating study in itself and a subject worthy of more objective historical research than it has received. For purposes of this discussion let us put it aside and examine another aspect of the Soviet effort toward Ethiopia in the 1960's and early 1970's: students. This was a period of student agitation throughout the entire non-Communist world, so it is not surprising that Ethiopian students, eager to imitate Western models, became engaged too.

In reality Ethiopian university students had few real grievances. Haile Selassie took a direct personal interest in development of education and with the aid of Western advisers and funds expanded university education rapidly. Any reasonably able and conscientious high school graduate stood an excellent chance of being given free college education either in Ethiopia or abroad and had fair reason to assume that the government would provide him with employment after he received his degree. But a Cinderella syndrome set in. So paternalistic a system in a society where the broad horizons of modernization had only recently opened up was bound to generate expectations that could

not be fulfilled. Since the first men who came back from education abroad soon became ministers and ambassadors, students assumed they would all advance as rapidly. Law and humanities courses were overflowing; engineering and science were less appealing. Jobs teaching in the provinces were not popular. Strains and minor grievances became magnified in the permissive²¹ university atmosphere and politicking became a habit.

The Russians were quick to recognize this as a fertile field where modest input in the form of money, tactical encouragement and help in preparing propaganda materials could produce impressive dividends. After the Ethiopians expelled several Soviet and East European embassy officers in the late 1960's, techniques were refined. Students in Ethiopia were supported through Ethiopian student organizations in Europe and America which blossomed at this time and became hotbeds of Marxism and channels for funneling money, propaganda and organizational guidance into Ethiopia. Security authorities discovered, e.g., that money was coming into Ethiopia in the guise of contributions from student organizations in places such as Berlin, Paris, London and Washington to charitable groups in Ethiopia, the national literacy campaign and other worthy causes.

During the period 1969-1972, university and even secondary school instruction was frequently interrupted for long periods by student demonstrations and boycotts. Each outbreak of violence led to charges of police brutality and the accumulation of new grievances and charges. Security authorities were relatively mild in dealing with students, for the old emperor would not

permit severe punishments and regularly forgave arrested student leaders. The most dramatic effect of all this commotion was the virtual elimination of the U.S. Peace Corps from Ethiopian education. Peace Corps volunteers, who were located in all parts of the country, had generally been warmly accepted by students and the communities in which they lived and they made a major contribution to Ethiopian secondary education. Some Peace Corps volunteers affected counter-culture lifestyles and strong anti-U.S. government attitudes and a few became involved in student agitation against the Ethiopian authorities, but most kept a lower profile. Within a surprisingly short period of time, in much of the country, students turned on Peace Corps teachers, prevented them from teaching and hounded them out of many provincial centers. In the course of 1970, most Peace Corps volunteers were withdrawn from the Ethiopian secondary school system.²²

Student agitation had little effect on Ethiopian governmental processes or daily life, but the educational process was set back and more families who could afford the expense sent their children abroad where some of them became even more directly exposed to Marxist influences from the now well established ESUNA and ESUE²³ and their subgroups. These groups had funds available for travel from one university to another and subsidized production of propaganda which was mailed into Ethiopia in large quantities.

In the larger sense, student agitation both at home and abroad resulted in creation of a politicized younger generation oriented exclusively to the left which could help accelerate the

destabilization process that Moscow envisioned -- and aimed to encourage -- in Ethiopia when Haile Selassie's long reign came to an end. It was a good investment. Funds and manpower expended by the Russians for encouragement of student political activity can never have been very great, wherever and by whatever circuitous channels they were brought to bear upon the situation.

To summarize the Russian approach to getting a grip on the Horn until the eve of the Ethiopian Revolution, of a situation that offered little promise of rapid gains in the Horn region as a whole, it is remarkable that the Russians spent lavishly, in terms of material, money and manpower, on Somalia and this to maximize a situation. Possessing not much more than a fraction of Ethiopia's population and much poorer in resources, Somalia was rated sufficiently valuable by the Russians to merit an outlay in 15 years of well over half a billion dollars, the equivalent of everything the United States spent on Ethiopia in 30 years.

In comparison, even if all the pre-1977 support for the Eritrean insurgency were ultimately to have come from Soviet resources (unlikely), it would still have been a low-cost operation. Perhaps as much as \$10 million per year of ultimate Soviet origin went into this insurgency during the brief period when support through Sudan was easy. At the outside, however, total Soviet investment in the Eritrean rebellion during the period up to 1977 is unlikely to have amounted to even a tenth of the investment in Somalia. It was a more productive investment in the sense that the Eritrean problem contributed more to the

destablization of Ethiopia during the transitional period after the revolution than Somalia did.

Encouragement of student and intellectual dissidence and radicalization of the educated younger class can have required no more than one tenth -- at the very most -- of the resources that went into encouragement of Eritrean insurgency -- less than one percent of the cost of the relationship with Somalia. This was the most productive political investment, for the students and intellectuals, actively infused with Marxism or at a minimum incapable of thinking politically in categories other than socialist-idealist nationalism, enormously contributed to the ferment of the Ethiopian Revolution.

In terms of risk the support of Somalia was overt and widely publicized and caused periodic strain and embarrassment for the U.S.S.R. The support of Eritrean insurgency was extremely discrete, through surrogates, and was carried out in such a way as to minimize likelihood of friction with Haile Selassie's government as well as with the United States. Support of students was initially quite direct, later less so. It resulted in expulsions and protests and aroused Ethiopian distrust and anger.

A final glance at Sudan is necessary before we close discussion of the pre-revolutionary period in Ethiopia. The Soviet investment in Sudan turned out to be unproductive except insofar as it made possible acceleration of the Eritrean insurgency. The net impact of involvement with the Soviets was negative not only on Nimeiry but on the great majority of Sudanese. No new pro-Russian party was created, and the

existence of the Sudan CP both complicated and was complicated by the Soviet relationship. Sudan, like Egypt, serves today as a model of the disadvantages of a close relationship with the Russians. They, in turn, have never been able to forgive Nimeiry for being successful in disengaging from his short, intense Soviet love affair.

Empire in Ferment

As 1973 drew to a close, there was a growing sense of impending change in Ethiopia but little outward fear of it. There was little basis for expectation that change would entail drastic shifts in the course of development which the country had long followed with considerable success or that Ethiopia's foreign relationships would inevitably be affected. There was almost no assumption that change would result in revolution. Officially non-aligned and particularistic in spirit, as throughout its long history, the country remained intellectually and psychologically oriented toward Western Europe and American and dependent on Free World economic and military relationships.

It would have been impossible to identify any overt pro-Soviet, pro-Communist or even vaguely pro-socialist group among officials or any segment of the population except students and a few intellectuals within the country, a few more abroad. There was no new or unusual tension among nationalities. Muslims and Christians lived side-by-side more amicably in Ethiopia than anywhere else in the region. Insurgency notwithstanding, large

numbers of Eritreans continued to live and work in Addis Ababa and participate in government and business in all parts of the country. That Russia armed Somalia and underwrote its forceful transition to a Communist-type regime was well known and regarded as a threat to Ethiopia. Two decades of Soviet cultural center effort in Addis Ababa and various aid projects had produced almost no Ethiopians who advocated the Russian approach to anything or any noteworthy intellectual interest in Russian culture or language. The Communist Chinese, who had set up an embassy in 1971 and embarked on a road-building project, had more appeal but primarily because their approach to Ethiopia was so conventional and their conduct so gracious.

Only a year later, as 1974 drew to a close, the country's political system had been radically altered and a mysterious military committee -- whose membership was unclear and whose workings no one understood -- was leading the country helter-skelter toward "Ethiopian Socialism" (proclaimed on 20 December) and made no secret of its desire to have a close relationship with the Soviet Union and Communist states allied with it. Haile Selassie had been deposed at the beginning of the Ethiopian new year in mid-September.²⁴ His successor as head of state, the Eritrean General Aman Andom, had been killed in a bloody shoot-out at the end of November, some said personally by Major Mengistu Haile-Mariam, already reputed to be a key Derg mover and shaker. During 1975, as Ethiopian socialism was implemented, Ethiopians experienced nationalizations, confiscations, rural and urban land reform, mass mobilizations and vast outpourings of

leftist propaganda -- a process as sudden and sweeping as any comparable society has undergone in modern times.

What had happened? Where had all this Marxism come from? Why such a compulsion to emulate the Soviet Union? Leftist enthusiasts of the Ethiopian Revolution are categorical in asserting that the Russians had absolutely nothing to do with it.²⁵ Otherwise there has been little serious scholarly effort to examine the issue.

One needs postulate no Russian hand to explain the effect of a series of developments during 1973 which contributed to a climate of uncertainty in Ethiopia. Fate seemed to have conspired to confront the country with several awkward problems simultaneously. The Crown Prince was crippled by a stroke at the beginning of the year and flown to London for treatment with Ras Asrate Kassa, President of the Crown Council and one of the most vigorous and prominent members of the traditional nobility,²⁶ accompanying him. This opened up the whole question of succession, settled formally only after Haile Selassie declared the Crown Prince's eldest son, 20-year-old Zara-Yakob, next in succession to his father at Easter time, but too late to stem widespread worry about the future of the monarchy which had already developed.

Meanwhile famine had become serious in the central and northern highlands. Inept handling of the problem undermined confidence in the government. Intellectuals and officials became outspokenly critical of governmental incapacity as did the foreign press and foreign governments. The October Arab-Israeli war provoked questions about reliance on Israel and the old

emperor's subsequent break in relations with Tel Aviv under Arab and African pressure raised doubt about his ability to manipulate an increasingly complex international situation. Psychologically more subtler in its impact but more profoundly unsettling was the growing realization among the Ethiopian elite that the United States, to which Ethiopia was linked in so many ways that had come to be taken for granted over more than two decades, was in the throes of self-doubt provoked by Vietnam and Watergate.²⁷

The most direct causes of the government crisis that developed early in 1974 were domestic price rises resulting from the OPEC price hike and restiveness among the military rank and file in the south and in Eritrea. Suddenly the government found itself confronted with civilian and military demands from all sides. On 28 February Haile Selassie dismissed his long-standing prime minister, Aklilu Habte-Wold, who had held office since 1958. He appointed a progressive aristocrat, Endelkachew Makonnen, in his place and on 5 March announced that the 1955 constitution would be amended to make the prime minister responsible to parliament. In the whirlwind of events that followed, this change never took place.

As political processes, long frozen, thawed and political debate opened up, Ethiopians rejoiced in the short-lived hope that perhaps the succession period many feared would go off more smoothly than anyone had heretofore thought likely. There was a sense of a new birth of freedom and rapid progress toward more modern political institutions was expected even without a change of monarch. Exiles began to return to the country. Labor unrest

developed. Students demonstrated. But there was almost no serious violence and the revolutionary process remained good-natured. Nevertheless the government always seemed to make reforms and concessions too late and new demands constantly welled up. Ferment in the armed forces grew and led at the end of April to organization of an armed forces coordinating committee. This committee went through several quick transformations before its consolidation in June. ²⁹ Mengistu seems to have appeared on the scene only after the committee was formed, but by late June he was already an influential figure. By July the Derg had become the dominant factor on the Addis Ababa political scene. Haile Selassie had completely lost control over events. The country's traditional leadership -- both the established aristocracy and the young technocrats who had risen to positions of responsibility and influence in the imperial government -- failed to pull itself together to challenge or serve as a counterweight to the junior and middle-level army officers who systematically took the reins of power into their hands and prepared to push Haile Selassie off his throne. This was no casual, spur-of-the-moment action. It was carefully prepared. Opposition was neutralized, co-opted or circumvented. The final action took place within the framework of carefully thought-out nationalist concepts under the simple slogan "Ethiopia Tikdem" -- which can mean either "Ethiopia United" or "Ethiopia First" and otherwise has no political implications whatsoever.

A comprehensive study of events during Ethiopia's unexpected year of revolution remains to be written. ³⁰ Outside influences

on the revolutionary process are not readily apparent. The United States stood aside while Haile Selassie faltered and was pushed aside. MAAG officers seem to have known almost none of the Ethiopian military men who formed the Derg. USAID went about business as usual. This was the summer when Watergate reached its culmination and President Nixon resigned. Henry Kissinger had other priorities, including Greek-Turkish confrontation over Cyprus. There was no concerted or serious U.S. effort to influence the course of events in Ethiopia in any direction. No other Western country seems to have tried to do so either.

Where were the Russians? Less diverted by crises at home than the Americans. Present as usual in Ethiopia but very much in the background. If some of the junior military men who played a role in the formation of the Derg had been recruited by Soviet intelligence officers in preceding years and were acting on the basis of Soviet guidance as they forged this secretive military committee into an instrument of power and took charge of the revolution, the undertaking was accomplished with extreme care and discretion. Clandestine encouragement and guidance -- if it were successful -- can hardly be expected to produce evidence, especially when carried out by experienced Soviet[®] or East European operators.

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Eager Derg - Reluctant Russians?

: Like the violent thunderstorms which pursue each other across the Ethiopian highlands during the annual great rains, the

revolutionary process, once begun, seemed to gather inexorable momentum. The great rains cease after three or four months. It took three to four years for the revolutionary storms to abate. Each new "reform" brought others in its wake and generated various kinds of controversy and resistance, not only among the "broad masses" but within government and Derg too. Violence became the hallmark of a revolution which until November 1974 had been almost without bloodshed. The workings of the Derg remained obscure. Even its exact size was unknown. During the three years 1975 through 1977 it was periodically wracked by internal upheavals which more often than not ended with the death of the losers. General Teferi Banti, who had become head of state when General Aman was killed, survived until February 1977 when he perished in palace violence which took several other lives, including at least one Mengistu loyalist. As soon as he emerged the winner of this imbroglio, Mengistu received congratulations from Fidel Castro and a personal visit from Soviet Ambassador Ratanov.

Like the elimination of Atnafu Abate later in the year, the political ramifications of all these clashes remain the subject of speculation. The possibility of concessions in Eritrean policy had been an issue in the fall of General Aman. The Derg adopted an uncompromising position immediately afterward. It has never deviated from this hard nationalist approach to the Eritrean rebellion. A major offensive was mounted in 1976. It was an embarrassing failure. The end of that year saw over twice as many Ethiopian troops committed there as in Haile Selassie's time and much less of the province under central government

control. By the end of 1977 almost all of Eritrea had been lost to insurgents who failed to capitalize on their gains because of factional rivalries. These, too, have remained a constant in the Eritrean situation ever since. Eritrea was not the only regional revolt the Derg had to contend with. Land reform provoked disorders in several parts of the country. Students sent out to revolutionize the peasantry generated ferment no one could control. Political commotion welled up in many areas as traditional leaders rebelled, fled or were driven out.

In Addis Ababa several rival political parties, or groups aspiring to political power, appeared on the scene. In political coloration they ranged from moderate left to extreme left. There was no center; no right -- in spite of constant condemnation of it in the press and by Derg spokesmen. Returned exiles, several of them Marxists who had made a name for themselves in the student movement abroad in the 1960's or early 1970's, went to work organizing factions. During 1975 the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP) surfaced, claiming that it had already been in existence before the revolution. The claim appears valid, for the party seems almost certainly to be the direct descendant of a Soviet-supported student organization, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Movement (EPRM) of the late 1960's. It rapidly developed into a major rival of the All Ethiopian Socialist Movement (better known by its Amharic initials, MEISON) which enjoyed more Derg favor. Factionalism on the outside was reflected in the Derg itself -- or many, indeed, have been largely a reflection of Derg factionalism or

indecision. In addition to continuing support during this period for individuals and groups they had assisted in pre-revolutionary times, the Russians appear to have given assistance to new political movements as well. There was a clandestine air about most of these competing political factions, uncertainty about their leaders, no information on their sources of funds and a good deal of mystery about how they operated internally. Provincial branches sometimes seemed to be at odds with central organizations in Addis Ababa. The official press was soon tightly controlled by the Derg through the Ministry of Information and reflected little of this political controversy. But there was a great outpouring of leaflets and unofficial news-sheets and journals which both reflected and helped generate political debate.

At a relatively low level of investment, the Russians and perhaps some of their surrogates appear during this period to have been testing out various factions and leaders, different political formulas. Part of their purpose may have been to keep pressure on those who were their favorites or instruments in the Derg and governmental structure. But there may also have been competing viewpoints among different elements in the Soviet operational structure in Ethiopia. Whatever all the causes were, so much political ferment and turmoil was generated that no one
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could control it.

The standard Soviet prescription for socialist regimes is to build a Communist-type party as the prime instrument for advancing (and containing) the revolutionary process, "educating the masses" and controlling society. The Derg -- apparently

including Mengistu himself -- reached a very different conclusion as a result of all this turmoil. They became frightened of all parties and feared a classic Communist-type party because it might develop its own momentum and dilute their own power; worse still, it could be manipulated by the Soviets against Derg leaders themselves. So Mengistu and his allies who increased their power after each internal Derg clash, resisted Soviet urgings to form a party -- and have continued to do so to this day.

Soviet encouragement of extreme factionalism had the result of frustrating application of a standard prescription for consolidating domination of a country won to "socialism". There was a deeper problem too. Long Soviet support of radical students and intellectuals had produced a hyper-politicized class which had an almost unlimited capacity to debate and theorize but little sense of organizational management and discipline.

The problem may nevertheless not have been as frustrating for key Soviets concerned with Ethiopia as some analysts have assumed. The Russian approach to Ethiopia through 1976 was still essentially a spoiling policy. It was a continuation of the pre-revolutionary approach now at a greatly accelerated pace -- but the aim was destabilization of Ethiopian society. Destabilization has been the goal since the 1960's when decisions were made to support Eritrean insurgency, encourage student dissidence and permit the Somalis to harrass Ethiopia by arming guerrillas in the Ogaden and Bale. Gaining control of the Ethiopian revolution was a long-sought aim -- but how could any

Russian yet be sure that this aim had really been achieved? The Russians were not deceived by the flood of adulatory Communist propaganda with which they had helped fill the Ethiopian media. They knew that at heart most educated Ethiopians were profoundly Western-influenced and the rest of the population deeply anchored in traditional modes of thought. Even the Marxists who debated theory and constantly increased the tempo of factional political infighting were suspect as contaminated by exposure to Western ways in Paris, Rome, and Washington.

But worst of all, the country remained dependent on the Americans for military support and received large amounts of U.S. and other Free World economic aid. Military force was more important than ever for holding the country together. Economic aid could not be readily dispensed with. The United States made no coherent effort to influence the course of events in Ethiopia during 1975 and 1976 other than to bemoan violence and timidly protest propaganda excesses, but it substantially increased military aid to the revolutionary regime. U.S. military assistance in 1974 was already double the amount it had been in any previous single year. It increased by another 55 percent in 1975 and there were plans for further increases. In addition purchase by Ethiopia of additional military supplies with its own funds was facilitated and the Derg expended \$100 million in this fashion. A commitment to Haile Selassie to modernize the Ethiopian Air Force was honored. Ethiopia received its first F5-E's in April 1976.

There had also been another development which must have seemed sinister to the Russians: Ethiopia had quietly resumed

informal relations with Israel in the summer of 1975. Israel was supplying both specialized military equipment and helping with training. The internal turmoil which intensified steadily in Ethiopia during 1975 and 1976 had two major consequences for the future, neither of which is likely to have been regarded as undesirable by the Russians at the time: 1) it undermined the basis for a continuing military relationship with the United States; 2) it whetted Somali desires to strike while Ethiopia was weak.

The Western press dramatized bloodshed in Ethiopia. An increasing flow of refugees told horror stories of cruelty and oppression. Pressure built up in the U.S. to cut off military supplies. Reports of the original genocidal intentions behind the great peasants' march into Eritrea in 1975 heightened American concern.³⁵ The U.S. Senate held extensive hearings in August 1976. The hearings were indecisive but a great many different things were said with the result that commentators ever since have drawn on the record of these hearings to demonstrate what U.S. policy either was or was not and to make U.S. intentions seem much more definite than they were -- in any direction -- during these final months of the Ford Administration. President Ford decided that in light of the continued violence in Ethiopia the U.S. could neither deliver nor sell further ammunition to the Derg. Delays which always occur in military aid arrangements were misread by some Derg members as efforts to pressure them. The Russians may have encouraged such

resentments with interpretations and disinformation. But they were slow to move toward a program of their own.

Constraints on resources may have been a factor influencing the Soviets to go slowly, especially in the wake of their recent successful exertions in Angola. But they still had a case for biding their time in order to get the best possible arrangement in Ethiopia from a political viewpoint and to be sure that the Ethiopian ruling team to which they eventually committed themselves had a capacity to maintain its hold on power. Americans felt weak and frustrated at the end of 1976 and the Ford Administration was smarting at the rebuff Congress had dealt it on Angola. But the Russians could not be sure. The U.S. had responded unpredictably before. Angola had not been a primary U.S. responsibility and commitment. Ethiopia, on the other hand, had, ever since the early 1950's. Too precipitate a Soviet move for military domination in Ethiopia could provoke a surge of American reaction which would undermine the whole steady Russian effort to gain a grip on the country which had been pursued for a quarter of a century at a time when it was coming closest to realization. Patience and caution were still in order.

Mengistu is reported to have been challenged by a group of radical Air Force officers at Debre Zeit in June 1976 on U.S. aid. He replied with an air of annoyance that he preferred Soviet help and had asked for it, but the Russians were not responding. There was no alternative but to remain dependent on the Americans.

Professions of friendship, laudatory socialist rhetoric, the to-and-fro of delegations and training groups notwithstanding,

the U.S.S.R. was still making its major investments in the Horn in Somalia. Ethiopia was costing very little. Promises of increased economic aid brought few deliveries. The \$100 million promised to Haile Selassie in 1959 had never been fully used. The Derg would have appreciated generous Russian aid offers and publicized them but such aid was not urgently needed for, in spite of nationalizations, aid continued to come from the U.S. and Europe and the country's sound financial condition enabled it to satisfy many of its own import requirements. ³⁶

The Soviets signed a friendship treaty with Somalia in 1974 and found Siad Barre eager to do what no one in the Derg wanted to risk: establish a classic Communist-style party. The Somali party was proclaimed in 1976 with enthusiastic Soviet endorsement. At the same time the Somali security service was strengthened along standard Soviet lines. Siad was a model friend of the Russians who lavished military aid on him to ensure that conservative Arab offers would be less attractive. The Russians sent more than \$300 million in arms to Somalia in the four years 1974-1977 -- i.e., after the Ethiopian revolution got under way. ³⁷ This is far in excess of the total of U.S. military aid and sales to Ethiopia during the same period -- approximately \$180 million -- and, in fact, more than the entire amount of military aid the U.S. supplied Ethiopia during the 25 years of mutual security relationship (1953-1977) -- \$287,300,000. ³⁸ Meanwhile the Russians continued to supply Somalia with only ³⁹ modest economic support and the country's economy stagnated.

Russian military advisers worked directly with the Somali armed forces down to battalion level and Russians, East Germans, Cubans and others worked closely with the Somali security services. It is inconceivable that the Russians were not aware of Siad's preparations for a major assault on Ethiopia, for the Somalis had begun to expand guerrilla capabilities as early as 1975. Somali -- supported insurgency in the Ogaden, Bale and Sidamo would have aroused more Ethiopian concern in 1976 if the Derg had not been so preoccupied with Eritrea and growing resistance movements in so many more highly developed and populated parts of the country.

Since 1977 the Soviets had been encouraging the myth that they opposed the Somali invasion of Ethiopia.⁴⁰ Western writers inclined to be sympathetic to Soviet activities in the Horn, whether in Somalia or Ethiopia, have built up a whole body of charitable speculation about the extent to which the Russians were allegedly unaware of Siad Barre's aggressive plans.⁴¹ At the same time they credit the United States with responsibility for the full-scale Somali invasion.⁴² To say that such interpretations are mistaken is to be much too kind to them. They are an egregious whitewash of Soviet conduct. One has to postulate a phenomenal degree of Russian ignorance of political processes to argue that the Soviet Union could not have seen the implications of Somalia's irredentism when it began its military aid program in the mid 1960's. Military aid was increased after Siad Barre came to power. Finally the Soviets decisively upgraded Somali military capabilities in the wake of the Ethiopian revolution. In view of this sustained effort to equip

the Somalis to move to satisfy their irredentist ambitions, any advice to the Somalis in the summer of 1977 has to be taken lightly as a measure of real Soviet intentions. Why did they not take military measures against the Somalis in the summer of 1977? Or at least take the initiative themselves to break relations or organize diplomatic pressure?

The most logical conclusion is that the Russians knew full well what they were about during 1975 and 1976. They were capable of generating strong desires and demands in the Derg for a comprehensive military relationship, and did. But they were not sure. Political ferment in Ethiopia and the inexperience of many members of the Derg justified doubts about the wisdom of trying for a firm grip on Ethiopia too soon. After all, memory of the disaster with Nimeiry and the Sudanese Communist Party was still fresh. And it was important to get the United States out of Ethiopia as thoroughly as possible. The investment in Somalia was large. It was desirable to try to preserve it. So the Russians played hard-to-get with the Ethiopian revolutionary leadership as long as they could be reasonably sure that they were improving their ultimate chances for hegemony over the whole region by doing so.

Year of Decision - 1977

During the period between November 1976 and November 1977 the Kremlin leadership had to take several major decisions in respect to the Horn. More than thirty years of Russian effort and between half a billion and a billion dollars of investment in the region came onto the line to be justified, defended and

capitalized upon, or lost. There must have been sharp differences of opinion on these issues in Moscow and among Russians in Horn capitals too -- factions favoring various tactics and aims must have formed. We know practically nothing about them.

All that we can say is that if there was hesitation to move and act, it did not last long. The aging Soviet leadership team, beset by mounting problems at home and in other parts of the Soviet Empire, was able to meet the challenge. Additional manpower and resources were expended in the Horn on a prodigious scale and risks were taken. But in the end sizable gains were made.

The general outlines of the story are well known, but highlights are worth recapitulating. The main features of this sequence of events seem to be these: Angola was a necessary preliminary to high adventure in the Horn. Two important lessons were learned: the utility of Cubans as mercenaries; the extent to which detente had succeeded in inhibiting American ability to protect seemingly marginal interests. The U.S. election of November 1976 must have been an important milestone in the Soviet decision process. The Democrats' victory convinced Moscow that it was safe to move on Ethiopia. Mengistu was invited to Moscow less than a month later (early December) and promised military aid on condition that he cut the American military connection. This caused dissension in the Derg which led to bloodshed in early February, the death of Teferi Banti and Mengistu's assumption of the position of head of state. Carter Administration criticism of the Ethiopian regime for human rights

violations provided a convenient pretext for Mengistu to expel all U.S. military personnel and terminate the military aid program in April, but had nothing to do with precipitating these actions in any fundamental sense. Some other pretext would have served as well -- such as failure to release ammunition or other "lethal" military supplies or an issue relating to nationalized

⁴³ property. The human rights issue was more dramatic and divisive, and Carter has been criticized ever since, primarily by conservatives, for undermining American foreign policy by displaying excessive zeal on human rights. The fact remains that human rights were being grossly violated in Ethiopia at that time and the Ford Administration had already become deeply concerned about the violations. The situation in Ethiopia worsened during the next year and a half. The time was long past in the spring of 1977 when the U.S. might have tried using military and economic aid as a lever for coercing the Derg into more moderate

⁴⁴ behavior.

While Mengistu was busy in March consolidating his hold over the Derg and preparing for military disengagement from the U.S., the Soviets brought Fidel Castro onto the scene to try to reconcile all the contradictions that resulted from the decision to become Ethiopia's main military supplier. Castro's March visit to Somalia, Ethiopia and Aden may have been a hasty attempt to fend off impending disaster. It could also have been a more carefully conceived scheme for maintaining a grip on both Somalia and Ethiopia that had developed over some time. Castro proposed federating the whole area, with autonomy for the Ogaden and

Eritrea, with the possibility that South Yemen would eventually join the federation too. A political construct of this sort, if it could have been brought into being, would have represented a formidable Soviet advance toward consolidation of control over the Red Sea approaches to the Indian Ocean. The Soviet investment in Somali facilities would all have been preserved; a heavy new investment in Ethiopia would have been unnecessary. Djibouti, not yet independent, and the best port in the whole region, might also have been brought into this new political entity. Last but not least the arrangement would have subsumed the Ogaden and Eritrean conflicts -- both to a substantial degree the consequence of Soviet support over a long period of time, though many other factors bore on them as well. It was an imaginative scheme and one from which the clear net gainer would only be the Soviets.

No one bought Castro's proposition. All the other Horn leaders saw more disadvantages than gains in it and preferred to stick to courses they were already on. For the Soviets the Castro proposition probably seemed to be a no-lose initiative -- for if the now looming Somali assault on Ethiopia quickly succeeded, the Russians could hope to dominate the whole area anyway. It is important to remember that the Soviets made no move at this time toward reducing their commitments to Somalia or their personnel there. And Siad himself was patient. Castro, going home disappointed, denounced him as more of a nationalist than a socialist. But the same could have been said of Mengistu. There is no reason to believe that he committed himself to surrendering Ethiopian sovereignty over either Eritrea or the

Ogaden. At this stage all the participants in the great confrontation that was looming were holding firm and daring other parties to act. Mengistu flew to Moscow in May, as soon as the American military installations had all been closed, and returned with an agreement for full military support from the U.S.S.R. The Soviets had already made modest shipments of military equipment to Ethiopia, transferring some from Aden. Some Russian and Cuban military advisers arrived. But operations remained on a very small scale until fall.

Meanwhile Siad's guerrillas stepped up operations. The vital railway from Addis Ababa to Djibouti was cut in early June. Ethiopians now knew the Somalis were playing for high stakes. Soon the distinction between guerrillas and Somalia regulars blurred and disappeared. By August the Somalis were in control of large parts of southeastern and southern Ethiopia and the country seemed to be on the verge of disintegration as other regional insurgencies expanded, the exile-based Ethiopian Democratic Union penetrated the country from Sudan into the northwest, and factional political infighting raged in Addis Ababa and some provincial capitals. Siad had by this time convinced himself that the ancient empire, if toppled, would shatter like Humpty Dumpty and could never be put together again.

The eastern stronghold of Jijiga, with a newly installed U.S.-supplied radar station, fell on the eve of the third anniversary of the revolution in September and opened the road to Harar. Reminiscent of Iran in 1981 in face of the Iraqi attack, Ethiopia also experienced an enormous surge of patriotic fervor

and psychologically the tide began to turn just when the country⁴⁵ appeared to have suffered a crippling blow.

The Derg appealed to the U.S. for a resumption of a military relationship that at the very minimum would permit release of material that had been in the delivery pipeline when Ethiopia expelled the U.S. military mission in the spring. The Carter Administration had made a very tentative tilt toward Somalia in June but quickly realized that the Somalis were actually⁴⁶ committing aggression with regular troops and backtracked. It then fell back upon what had always been U.S. policy in the area -- recognition of the territorial integrity of all countries in the region, but with the added proviso that the U.S. would supply⁴⁷ no arms to any party in the conflict. During September 1977 both Soviet and U.S. official missions came to Addis Ababa to size up the situation. The U.S. mission reported that Ethiopia was not disintegrating but recommended no reversal of what was, in effect, a complete U.S. arms embargo on both Ethiopia and Somalia. The Russians still delayed making a major commitment, perhaps wanting to ensure themselves that Mengistu had the capacity to hold the Derg together and to rally Ethiopians to the defense of their country. Political infighting had reached a new high during this very period, with the EPRP openly challenging the Derg for leadership. A group of Marxist intellectuals led by Haile Fida who had initially been treated with favor by some Derg members and who may have appeared to the Soviets to be the best nucleus for setting up a Communist-style party, fell out with⁴⁸ Mengistu, fled to the provinces and were later captured. Mengistu was the target of several assassination attempts during

the fall of 1977. The Russians must also have wanted to feel sure that the U.S. would not start providing military aid again. It was bad enough to have Ethiopia dependent upon Israel for crucially needed specialized items and an unofficial Israeli political mission in Addis Ababa.

Siad Barre may have had as much impact on the Russian decisions which followed as any other factor. The Russians took no steps to break with him and thought he had permitted Somali mobs to attack Cubans and Russians who were being withdrawn from Somalia (sometimes coming directly to Ethiopia) in the late summer, he had not taken any preliminary measures toward a decisive break. Russian military aid appears to have continued to arrive in Somalia through August. Siad flew to Moscow late in that month, in fact, to try to persuade the Russians to abandon support of Ethiopia, which he pictured as being on the verge of collapse. The Russians continued to equivocate. Siad could not. He had to follow up on his initial successes against Ethiopia or risk fatal loss of momentum. Though by autumn he had captured most of the regions with Somali population, he pressed on into Oromo-inhabited territory along the edge of the highlands, besieged the ancient walled city of Harrar and came close to surrounding the modern railroad center of Dire Dawa, the only city in Ethiopia with a sizable urban Somali population. 49

This was all that was needed to consolidate the great upwelling of national feeling that now gripped Ethiopians throughout most of the country. The Derg was now recognized as defending the national interest in a way it had not previously

enjoyed. Like Stalin after the Nazi invasion in 1941, Mengistu made appropriate concessions to national feeling, quietly moderated some of the discriminatory measures that had affected the Orthodox Church, and eased the pace of implementation of revolutionary reforms. Nevertheless, while the Somali military advance had slowed during October, the initiative still lay with the invaders.

Mengistu flew to Cuba and Moscow at the end of October. Then Raul Castro flew to Moscow in early November, accompanied by the same Cuban generals who later figured prominently in the campaign in Ethiopia. Somewhere in this sequence of visits, the Soviet decision to commit massive numbers of Cubans, a greatly expanded Russian advisory group and unprecedented quantities of Soviet arms and equipment to Ethiopia was made. Siade Barre got wind of it and announced expulsion of the Russians and closure of all their installations in Somalia on November 13 -- but diplomatic relations were not broken. General Petrov, who became the senior Soviet commander in Ethiopia, arrived in Addis Ababa on November 17.

In the last week of November the massive airlift of troops and supplies from the U.S.S.R. to Ethiopia began. The decision to commit the forces needed to expel the Somalis from all Ethiopian territory had been taken. The high military cost of the operation was clearly recognized, for the air and sea lifts that followed during December and into early 1978, and the operations they enabled the Ethiopians to carry out, with direct Cuban combat participation and leadership and close Soviet advisory involvement, reveal no evidence of skimping or

economizing. Everything that was needed to accomplish the task was provided and a good deal of extra material and arms as well. By the close of 1977, \$440 million worth of military assistance had already been delivered. The Soviets brought in a further \$1.1 billion in arms of all kinds in 1978 and another \$210 million worth in 1979 -- \$1,750,000,000 in military aid for Ethiopia in barely 2-1/2 years to secure the long-sought position of pre-eminence there that represented the real prize in the 50 Horn.

Events in Ethiopia and elsewhere in the Horn were headlines in the world press during the winter of 1977-78 and well into the following summer. Cuban manpower, Russian advisers and massive quantities of Soviet arms and supplies enabled the Ethiopians to regain control of all territory overrun by the Somalis. Siad Barre was unwilling, however, to give up the fight and reverted to a sustained guerrilla harassment operation which made it impossible for the United States to provide any military aid to Somalia until 1981. Developments in both Ethiopia and Somalia during the past four years have entailed many twists, turns and contradictions. To review them is beyond the scope of this essay which will now in conclusion be directed to consideration of two basic sets of questions:

- (a) What factors were most significant in Soviet advances in the Horn?
- (b) What have the Soviets gained? What problems must they overcome to consolidate their grip on the region? What are their prospects?

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Flexible Persistence

If we examine Soviet actions in the Horn only in the context of the late 1970's, they appear daring, provocative and openly disdainful of the United States. But this is too narrow a view. If we start with the 1940's, we see a slow, deliberate effort to lay the groundwork for gaining influence based on a deeper historical awareness of the intrinsic strategic value of the region. There was not much movement until the end of the 1950's. In the 1960's a great burst of activity occurred, some of it naive and overly hasty. The Soviets did not do well in Sudan when opportunities opened up for them. In Somalia, on the other hand, they built steadily and came close to creating a model client state. They were models of discretion in Ethiopia on the overt plane, clever and creative covertly.

Economic aid played no significant role in their success. They always gave sparingly and reduced their commitments as time passed. They were not good at exploiting religion, even in Ethiopia, where old Orthodox Christian ties existed. Somalia, too, is a deeply religious country, but Islam was not a hindrance to the Russians there. Russian culture had no appeal to anyone in the Horn. Marxism in the abstract had little appeal either, but it provided slogans and a body of doctrine that was convenient as a rationalization for radical intellectuals and military men alike who aspired to get a handle on their societies and exercise power over them. The attractiveness of Marxist ideology as a basis for organizing a state-directed economy also appealed to these same groups who were fearful of their own

ability to compete in societies organized according to Western principles of free enterprise and pluralistic interplay of political forces.

Two factors stand out above all others as the key to Soviet success in the Horn: 1) willingness to supply large quantities of military aid with little worry about how it might eventually be used; and 2) capacity to develop and sustain subversive programs over long periods of time to promote political destabilization and build pressures that can be exploited to Soviet advantage.

Patience and persistence -- even a fair degree of cautiousness -- are the main characteristics of the Soviet effort to get a grip on the Horn when examined in the perspective of nearly four decades. But when the pace of events quickened and threatened to get out of control, these same Russians demonstrated remarkable flexibility and readiness to take rapid and decisive action. Neither ideology nor moral commitments acted as a deterrent to action when it became necessary in 1977. The governmental decision-making machinery obviously functioned efficiently. Crass power considerations took priority -- risks were taken and resources expended daringly to maximize opportunities for expanding power.

It is important not to idealize the Soviet performance, however. We must keep in mind the fact that the Soviet advance into Ethiopia took place at a time when effective U.S. power there had almost evaporated. Some of the relative caution the Russians displayed during the first two years after the

revolution can undoubtedly be ascribed to residual respect for the high degree of influence the U.S. and its Western allies had long exercised in the country. Even as it became apparent that the U.S. was no longer interested in -- or perhaps even capable of -- maintaining its influence, the Russians took no chances of provoking an unexpected American response. Instead they concentrated on encouraging circumstances to develop in such a way that the U.S. was effectively blocked from acting in its own interest by self-imposed restrictions.

The prime feature of the U.S. predicament in respect to the Horn during 1977 was an extreme lack of flexibility, compounded by shallowness of political perspective. The roots of this problem all go back to the period before the Carter Administration took office. They lie in the deterioration of U.S. governmental processes and the tensions which grew up between legislative and executive branches in the early 1970's. They lie also in the illusions of detente. Detente as such, however, has little direct bearing on the situation as it developed in the Horn from 1977 onward. The Russians did not simply take advantage of openings created by detente to advance in this region. Detente created no new openings for them there. It was their own steady efforts that created them. Flexible persistence paid off. On the American side, however, and on that of West Europeans with an interest in Ethiopia, detente inhibited not only the capacity to see the strategic significance of what was happening in the Horn, but even dulled the sense of moral commitment to people who had long placed their hope in the Free World.

When Mengistu, Derg members and Ethiopian government officials berate the United States for having let their country down in its hour of need and refer to American refusal to supply spare parts and release previous Ethiopian military purchases in the summer of 1977 after the Somali attack, they are being very selective, if not hypocritical, for it was they who -- with some glee -- severed the American military relationship only a few short months previously. ⁵² Some of them would clearly have been willing to cut it much earlier if the Russians had then been ready to step in. In a larger sense, however, Ethiopians have justification for feeling let down by their American and European friends who, after providing so much economic aid, creating so many educational opportunities, and displaying so much sincere understanding and appreciation of the country and its problems, largely ignored it and let it drift into destabilization and revolution without making serious efforts to affect the process. Lack of Western will, nurtured by the illusions of detente, had a good deal to do with creating these circumstances.

Can the Grip be Maintained?

The visitor to Ethiopia today is struck by the relative peace and order of the central part of the country, though there are many outlying regions to which travel is not permitted and insurgency still affects life in Tigre and Eritrea, though it has been much reduced in the latter province from the level of 1977-⁵³ 1978. And while on the surface -- red flags, portraits of Marx, Engels and Lenin, Communist sloganry everywhere -- the country gives the appearance of greater loyalty to the Soviet

system than the countries of Eastern Europe where Russian hegemony has long been established, one does not have to penetrate very deep into the society to discover that Communism is far from consolidated. The visitor will also be surprised to find so little direct evidence of Soviet and Cuban presence, for at least 12,000 Cubans remain and there is a large group of Russian military and technical advisers.⁵⁴ The Cubans are mostly in camps in the countryside, training Ethiopian recruits, and the Russians are much less visible than the Americans were in their heyday. The Russians, particularly, seem uncomfortable in Ethiopia. No trend toward increasing Russian presence or influence is evident. Mengistu does not rely on Cubans or Russians for his own personal security.

Cubans have stayed out of the fighting in Eritrea and some Ethiopians are beginning to complain about having to go on paying local costs for them. At least 250,000 Ethiopians are under arms, more than half of them fighting intermittently in Tigre, Eritrea and elsewhere in the north. Others are still on the alert in southern and eastern areas which had been overrun by the Somalis, where rehabilitation and resettlement are proceeding haltingly. Insurgency in these regions seems almost to have disappeared. Siad Barre no longer has the resources to sustain -- or the political momentum to inspire -- insurgency in the Ogaden and Bale. A large portion of the Somali population of this region -- and some Oromos as well -- are in refugee camps in Somalia. Siad's political dilemma is more acute than Mengistu's, for any return to an aggressive posture toward Ethiopia will

undermine his chances for continuing to receive the modest
military aid that has finally been provided to Somalia. ⁵⁵

The southwestern coffee - producing provinces, with their colorful and polyglot populations, have been one of the least disturbed parts of the country throughout the revolutionary period. These were among the last areas of modern Ethiopia to be brought under imperial control in the late 19th and early 20th century. Their loyalty to the Ethiopian state negates theories that disparage the viability of modern Ethiopia as an example of African imperialist colonialism, an artificial polity that lacks its own political dynamism.

Ethiopia is still governed by Ethiopians, as it always has been. There is still obvious pride in being Ethiopian which manifests itself in dozens of ways. Old patterns have reasserted themselves. Mengistu's style of governing has a good deal in common with that of his imperial predecessors. The country is again, as it was in Haile Selassie's time, focusing on education and economic development. A sustained national campaign is said to have raised literacy markedly. Several languages are now used for elementary school instruction, newspapers, radio and TV, but the status of Amharic, the national language since medieval times, remains firm. But there are also sharp contrasts with the imperial era. None is greater than among students, who are now perhaps the most docile element in Ethiopian society today -- studying and avoiding politics. Everyone in Ethiopia avoids politics now -- memories are too sharp of the political turmoil of the immediate post-revolutionary years, culminating in the Red Terror which raged in 1978 as a deliberate Derg effort to bring

it under control. Political life, such as it is, now revolves around marching and cheering and going to meetings to study the ideological pronouncements of COPWE, the substitute party that occupies the elegant former parliament building in the center of the capital. Ethiopia is not only without a party, as it was under the emperor, it now lacks a parliament and a constitution (which it had then) as well. The government's title remains **Provisional Military Government of Socialist Ethiopia (PMGSE)**. The workings of the Derg are as mysterious as ever. It does not appear to be evolving into either a parliament or a party. It may now consist of no more than 30 members.

Ethiopia's real problems remain: modernization, economic development, how to recognize ethnic and regional diversity and preserve national unity. To be dealt with they require money, organization, patience and political and administrative skill. Nothing that has occurred in the past eight years offers basis for belief that the Russian-style "socialist" approach to these challenging tasks promises better results than the pragmatic "capitalist" approach that was taken, with considerable success, in the pre-1974 period. Quite the contrary, for it is already becoming apparent that the Cubans and the Russians are much less relevant to most of these problems than Ethiopia's former friends were.

Ethiopia is already beginning to display many of the economic symptoms that are present in much more advanced form in countries which have experienced Soviet-style "socialism" for a much longer period of time: lagging agricultural deliveries,

expanding black market in basic commodities and key export crops (coffee, e.g.), low productivity in state-run industry, skyrocketing costs in state-operated agricultural enterprises, inefficiency and corruption in government bureaucracies, rising expectations on the part of the population which cannot be met. Far-reaching plans have been developed for collectivization of agriculture. None of these offers real promise of easing problems that are already apparent: peasants find the rigidities of the present associations to which they all belong uncomfortable and are holding back on deliveries of produce because of low prices paid by state-operated purchasing agencies. The Russian prescription for such difficulties -- more rules and regulations, more coercion, more bureaucrats devising more plans -- compounds the problems. There has been no significant industrial development in Ethiopia since the revolution, little new construction. The country's limited resources are consumed in maintaining a military establishment that is at least six times its size under Haile Selassie.

Unless Ethiopia can sharply reduce the proportion of revenue that goes to support this vast military apparatus, prospects for any economic development at all are poor -- barring, of course, a major input of Soviet economic aid. The Soviets have been generous with military aid, but they have been parsimonious about economic help. Great plans for dams and irrigation schemes have been laid by eager Ethiopian bureaucrats before groups of Russian technicians. Nothing has happened. Modest Russian efforts to search for petroleum, capitalizing on earlier work done by Western companies, have brought no results. The Russians have

been unwilling to offer Ethiopia a long-term petroleum supply guarantee. Detailed recent figures are not available, but it appears likely that Ethiopia is still receiving substantially more economic development assistance from European countries and international lending agencies than it does from the Russians and their friends. With Soviet economic prospects as poor as they now appear to be, how can Ethiopia expect to rank very high among competing demands: Poland, Cuba, Afghanistan, Vietnam...?

Seen in thirty-year perspective, the Russian effort to get a grip on Ethiopia had few positive features and these became less pronounced as the effort gained momentum. Religious and cultural relations and economic aid were maintained but not expanded or increased, while priority went to efforts directed toward destabilizing Ethiopian society and putting increasing strain on the established governmental apparatus. After a period of apparent doubt about the most efficacious way of gaining the upper hand in Ethiopia, the Russians in 1976-1977 found themselves with no alternative but to play the role of Ethiopia's defender, sole source of military support and direct sponsor of Cuban troop assistance to neutralize the Somali threat which the Russians had themselves created -- in the sense that no matter what Somali irredentist ambitions might have been, they could never have taken concrete military form without massive Russian arms and training assistance. The Soviet Union was happy to serve as a model for socialism in Ethiopia through 1977 without paying a price. The events of 1977 forced the Russians to shift to a constructive posture -- if they want to turn Ethiopia into a

model of revolutionary success, Soviet-style, they must pay for it. But how?

One expedient is now working itself out. The tripartite alliance which was created in Aden in August 1981 (Libya, Ethiopia, South Yemen) represents an interim effort to bring Qaddafi to the rescue. Reports of Libyan aid to Ethiopia have subsequently run as high as \$900 million, but it is difficult to find even circumstantial evidence that resources approaching anything comparable to this amount have been made available to Mengistu's government. Libya's available funds are contracting rapidly.

If Ethiopia is to have any hope of shifting its priorities to economic development and self-sustaining growth, it needs peace, both with its neighbors and internally. Peace has proved elusive and the Soviets have little leverage on the situations that cause greatest strain: Eritrea and Tigre, e.g. This is particularly ironic, because both the Eritrean and Tigrean rebel movements claim to be Marxist. Mengistu continues to take an uncompromising position on Eritrea. The latest offensive intended to eliminate Eritrean insurgency -- during the first months of 1982 -- has fallen short of its objective. Improved relations with Sudan could help reduce the insurgent threat in Eritrea, but the Russians have always been leery of close Ethiopian-Sudanese ties. They are also less than enthusiastic about too warm relations between Ethiopia and Kenya. From the Russian viewpoint strain between Ethiopia and its neighbors serves their advantage. But how long does it serve the Ethiopians' interest to let these strains persist?

Military and economic factors form the concrete issues around which the Ethiopian-Russian relationship now revolves. The likelihood that these issues can be worked out smoothly in the years ahead appears poor, and even those Ethiopians who are most eager to turn their country into a model junior partner of the Soviet Union are bound to be disappointed by Russian capacity to meet Ethiopia's needs and expectations. But the problems are not going to be confined to the material dimension. Ethiopians' awareness of their history and traditions is deep. Religion is an important part of this awareness. The Derg has been wary of offending religious feelings. In the early period of the revolution, Orthodox Christianity was subtly downgraded and Islam upgraded, but the process never went very far. While the Orthodox Church has been deprived of some of its traditional leadership, the hierarchical structure has remained intact. Among the population at large the Orthodox Church has lost no significant influence. There appears, in fact, to be a marked resurgence of religion in Ethiopia. Current government efforts to restrict evangelical church organizations do not appear to be having much effect. Churches of all denominations are well attended; so are mosques. Among both Christians and Muslims identification with Ethiopian national traditions remains strong and may even be increasing. The fact that the country's socialist leadership has felt compelled to communicate with the population in the old religious idiom is a measure of the extent to which religious habits of thinking remain embedded in the Ethiopian mind. But there is little reason to believe that

efforts such as the following poem do not strike the Ethiopian mind as ludicrous, just as they strike us:

THE TRINITY

The myth of the old book reveals in the New Book
Three in Flesh but One in Soul.
Three in One and One in Three.
The Trinity in Unity for Man's Liberty!
Marx the Father, Engels the Son
And Lenin the Holy Ghost
56
Made the new Man free from Slavery!

The Russians have expended close to \$3 billion on the Horn as a whole in the past thirty years: well over half a billion in Somalia and more than \$2 billion on Ethiopia, less on Sudan. Their efforts have given them a grip on the heart of the Horn -- Ethiopia, but it is far from consolidated. Only by expenditure of large additional sums on economic development -- the area in which they have been least willing to spend and in which their own record is poorest -- can they hope to maintain their grip for long. But even with such expenditure, the trip can hardly be regarded as assured.

FOOTNOTES

1. See Sergius Yakobson, "Russia and Africa", Part I in the *Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 17, August 1939; Part II in the same journal, Volume 19, 1939-40.
2. The best survey of Russian involvement with Africa in the 19th and early 20th centuries is Edward T. Wilson, *Russia and Black Africa before World War II*, Holmes & Meier, New York/London, 1974. An often-cited earlier work, Czeslaw Jesman, *The Russians in Ethiopia - An Essay in Futility*, Chatto & Windus, London, 1958, is less complete. A late 20th century author would have to be more hesitant about subtitling such a book "an essay in futility". What seemed like a closed chapter in the 1950's turned out to be a prelude to a great deal more history.
3. These activities have been treated in lively detail by Carlo Zaghi, *I Russi in Ethiopia*, 2 Vols., Guida Editori, Naples, 1972.
4. See Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 54, 58.
5. Patricia Wright, *Conflict on the Nile - the Fashoda Incident of 1898*, Heinemann, London, 1972.
6. Milene Charles, *The Soviet Union and Africa*, University Press of America, Washington, 1980, pp. 36-39.
7. It is hardly accidental that the Soviets and their surrogates appear not to have terminated support for the Eritrean insurgents until some time in 1977, for they wished to keep open the option of expanding their influence in the Horn through exploitation of Somali irredentism and Eritrean insurgency until they felt sure of gaining a solid grip on the centralized

Ethiopian governmental structure. During the first three years of the Ethiopian revolution, it was not clear that a centralized state would survive, though the Soviets opted for it decisively in December 1976 when they promised Mengistu major military assistance on condition that the U.S. military relationship be severed. It is possible that the Soviets reinsured themselves even after 1977 by continued ties to the Eritreans with some support coming through East Europeans or the Italian Communists. Such links could remain to this day.

8. My study "Russians in the Horn - Opportunism and the Long View", originally prepared for the Council on Foreign Relations and shortly to be issued in expanded form by the Wilson Center at the Smithsonian, deals with these questions at much greater length.

9. During the decade 1961-1970 Somalia received by far the largest per-capita foreign aid of any country in the Horn region, while Ethiopia received the least. Per-capita averages for this decade are as follows: Ethiopia - \$13.80; Kenya - \$56.90; Somalia - \$90.00; Sudan - \$26.62. Source as for footnote Number 11 below.

10. I.M. Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia*, revised edition, Longmans, New York/London, 1980, provides the most comprehensive interpretation of developments in the country since independence. Unfortunately, like most sympathetic treatments of modern Somali history, it deals with the break with the Russians at the end of 1977 with more insight and at greater length than the period of close friendship which preceded it.

11. These and most other military and economic aid statistics in this paper, unless otherwise noted, are derived from the annual publications of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, **World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers**, which have appeared regularly for more than a decade, usually summarizing data for ten years previous to the final date covered. I have gathered and analyzed much of this data in a paper entitled "Arming the Horn", presented to the VIIth International Ethiopian Studies Conference, Lund, Sweden, April 26-29, 1982.

12. Exact figures on Soviet economic aid to Somalia are difficult to obtain. As of 1974 the U.S.S.R. had offered approximately \$90 million but less than half of this sum appears to have been drawn down. During the 16 years 1962-1977 the United States supplied Somalia and Ethiopia with economic aid as follows: (\$ millions)

	<u>Loans and Grants</u>	<u>Peace Corps</u>	<u>Total Economic Aid</u>
Somalia	73	5.4	78.4
Ethiopia	275.1	33.8	308.9

Given the fact that Ethiopia's population was at least eight times that of Somalia, per capita U.S. aid to Somalia was at twice the level of per capita economic aid to Ethiopia. U.S. economic aid to Somalia was probably equals to, and may even have exceeded, Soviet economic aid in value. Sources as for footnote Number 38 below.

13. Good assessments of developments during this period include David Laitin, "The Political Economy of Military Rule in Somalia" in Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 14/3, 1976; and Brian

Crozier, "The Soviet Presence in Somalia", in Conflict Studies, February 1975.

14. See Gabriel Warburg, Islam, Nationalism and Communism in a Traditional Society - The Case of Sudan, Cass, London, 1978, pp. 93-140.

15. Anwar Sadat maintained he gave Nimeiry warning -- see Warburg, op. cit., p. 135.

16. The best account of the period is Christopher Clapham, Haile Selassie's Government, Praeger/Longmans, New York/London, 1969.

17. The Russian approach to Haile Selassie is reminiscent in many respects of their approach to the Shah of Iran until his fall.

18. For background on Eritrea, G.K.N. Trevaskis, Eritrea. A Colony in Transition, OUP, London, 1960, is indispensable. No study of the Eritrean rebellion which has appeared to date could remotely qualify as either objective or complete. The most extensive, Richard Sherman, Eritrea - The Unfinished Revolution, Praeger, New York, 1980, provides a great deal of data favorable to the Eritreans and ignores a good deal that is not. A study of the Eritrean insurgency by Haggai Erlich now in press at the Hoover Institution is likely to prove more objective than any other which has yet appeared.

19. The U.S. MAAG in Ethiopia refrained from direct involvement in Ethiopian operations against the Eritrean rebels, but U.S. military aid and counterinsurgency training of Ethiopian military personnel were important in improving Ethiopian performance. The Eritreans were well aware of these activities but chose to avoid

attacks on Kagnew or confrontation with Americans. Incidents which occurred were accidental.

20. Bereke Habte-Selassie, Conflict in the Horn of Africa, Monthly Review Press, New York/London, 1980, provides both indirect and direct confirmation of Soviet and other Communist support. So do Halliday & Moynaux, op. cit.

21. For interesting data on student psychology see David C. Korten, Planned Change in a Traditional Society - Psychological Problems of Modernization in Ethiopia, Praeger, New York/London, 1972, esp. pp. 239-271.

22. The Peace Corps became a special target of the left in many parts of the world about this time, a phenomenon which merits more comparative study. From its inception the Peace Corps had drawn intense hostility from the left in Latin America. In Turkey, the Peace Corps fell victim even more rapidly than in Ethiopia to mounting leftist agitation during this period. There was bitter irony in these developments in light of the great lengths to which both Peace Corps leadership and rank and file had gone to demarcate Peace Corps undertaking from all other U.S. Government operations.

23. Ethiopian Students Union of North America and Ethiopian Students Union of Europe.

24. Though technically Ethiopia remained a monarchy, with Crown Prince Asfa Wossen, incapacitated in London, declared king of deposition of the Emperor. The declaration was revoked in March 1975 when all royal titles were abolished.

25. So much so, in fact, that some of them provoke doubt by the very vehemence of their denials. This is especially true of

Halliday & Moyneus, op. cit., p. 214, e.g., who maintain that the U.S. tried to prevent the Ethiopian revolution and go to great lengths to impugn American motives from a bewildering variety of contradictory angles both before and after 1974. Marina Ottaway, Soviet and American Influence in the Horn of Africa, Praeger, New York, 1982, pp. 90, 91, & 103, inter alia, makes the same assertions more naively, pronouncing the Russians blameless of any involvement with the Ethiopian revolution until the end of 1976.

26. There had long been doubt about the Crown Prince's ability to succeed his father, and about his father's willingness to have him as successor, but during the early 1970's Haile Selassie had taken steps to underscore his commitment to his eldest son's succession, a position he reiterated to Asrata Kassa when he appointed him President of the Crown Council in August 1971. There was a widespread assumption among the Ethiopian elite, including younger government officials who were positive toward him, that the Crown Prince on accession would take immediate steps to share power with parliament as a committed constitutional monarch and would permit political parties to function. He described these intentions to me at length in a private audience I had with him in August 1972.

27. This problem was compounded when U.S. Ambassador E. Ross Adair left his post in January 1974 for medical reasons. He was not replaced and a weak embassy staff was hard put to maintain contact with Ethiopian officialdom, let alone influential private Ethiopians, during the confusing and fast-moving situation in the

months that followed. There was an American ambassador in Ethiopia for only 16 of the next 54 months -- i.e. between January 1974 and July 1978, when Frederick Chapin, appointed by President Carter and accepted by Mengistu, took up his post.

28. For one attempt at unraveling the still mysterious maneuverings in and among various elements in the armed forces that led to the establishment of the Derg (which simply means "committee" in Amharic), see Marina and David Ottaway, Ethiopia - Empire in Revolution, Holmes & Meier, New York/London, 1978, pp. 48-52.

29. A Gojjami Amhara, reputed to be a conservative nationalist at heart, he played a prominent role during the first three years of the revolution and was regarded as second in power to Mengistu. He was liquidated in November 1977, charged with placing the interests of Ethiopia ahead of the interests of socialism.

30. I am currently involved in an attempt, in partnership with Haggai Erlich of Tel Aviv University, to chronicle in detail the year 1974 in Ethiopia in order to establish 1) what is known and can be explained and 2) what is not known and needs to be clarified in respect to this hectic and dramatic year.

31. I was recently told by an Ethiopian now living in Europe who was in continual contact with many leading figures in Addis Ababa during 1974 (but not himself in a governmental position) that the Hungarian embassy, and specifically the Hungarian cultural attache, had served as an important point of contact with Derg elements during this time. The cultural attache is said to have cultivated relationships with military and security officers who

had originally been selected in the early 1970's for anti-hijacking and counter-terror training and came to form an activist clique who members felt a strong link with each other. I have been unable to confirm this information from other sources, but note that Soviet use of satellite diplomatic and intelligence personnel for politically risky subversive operations in many parts of the world seems to have expanded from the late 1960's onward. If the "anti-hijackers", as the group is said to have become known in 1974, actually fell under Communist influence and control, this was an ironic turn of events, for originally Ethiopian personnel were trained in various forms of counter-subversion techniques by Israel and the United States.

32. For a more extensive review of this period, see my "Communism and Ethiopia" in Problems of Communism, May-June 1981. Citations to this article include much of the published reporting and source material on this period.

33. COPWE, the Commission for Organizing the Party of the Workers of Ethiopia, was finally set up at the end of 1979 and held its first congress in June 1980. Though it performs some of the functions of a Communist-type party, it has not been allowed to develop an independent leadership structure -- its leadership is identical with that of the Derg and government.

34. It was these efficient fighter aircraft, more than any other single factor, that enabled the Ethiopians to stem the Somali advance in the summer of 1977. The Soviet-supplied Somali airforce was quickly neutralized by the Ethiopians whose American

training as pilots was also superior to that the Somalis had been given.

35. The reports were well founded and stemmed from advance briefings given by Derg members to meetings of Ethiopian diplomats in Europe and the Middle East on how to minimize the public relations consequences of the brutal and destructive offensive that was planned. Kissinger, as a result of such reporting, sent a strong personal warning to the Derg which is believed to have caused some modification of plans.

36. Revolutionary Ethiopia inherited a well-managed fiscal and financial structure from the imperial regime and kept some of the same men who had managed it for the emperor in authority. The country's financial situation was also aided by high coffee prices during the mid-1970's.

37. In 1978 dollars, military aid received by Somalia during the years 1974-1977, almost all of which came from the U.S.S.R. or allied Communist states, is calculated at \$398 million by ACDA, with a current ("then-year") dollar value of \$340 million. See World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1970-1979, ACDA Publication Number 112, Washington, 1982, p. 118.

38. The figure is from the USAID publications, U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants ... Obligations and Loan Authorizations, July 1, 1945-September 30, 1981, Washington, 1982.

39. I have not gathered complete statistics on this subject, but it appears probably from available data that the United States alone actually supplied Somalia with more economic aid during the period 1960-1977 than the Soviet Union did -- \$91.8 million according to the USAID publication cited in the preceding

footnote. With the enormous upsurge in refugee assistance since 1977, U.S. allocations rose dramatically, totaling \$172.3 million during the period 1978-1981 (exclusive of \$40.4 million in military assistance, 1980-1981). It is apparent that the U.S. has underwritten much of the cost of the refugees resulting from the Somali attack on Ethiopia. Seen in a broader context, the Soviet Union has poured in the arms, and the U.S. (and other Western countries) have paid for the consequences of the over-arming: the refugees. The Soviets are not known to have contributed anything to refugee relief in either Somalia or Ethiopia.

40. Soviet Ethiopianist Maria Rait provided a summary of the current Soviet line in a paper presented to the VIIth International Conference on Ethiopian Studies, Lund, Sweden, in April 1982, "Peaceful Borders on the Horn of Africa". Ethiopians present at the conference did not find the paper convincing.

41. See, e.g., Halliday & Molyneus, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

42. *Idem*, p.266.

43. This rather scholastic distinction loomed large in Carter Administration decisions on military aid to many countries. To most receiving countries it appeared to be mere sophistry designed to camouflage American desire to withhold aid for various other reasons.

44. It can be argued that if the U.S. had withheld military aid in 1974 or 1975, instead of greatly increasing it and facilitating additional arms sales for cash, the Derg's already strong pro-Soviet declaratory stance might have been modified.

Such an approach could also have had the result of forcing the Soviets much sooner to make binding commitments to the Derg on military aid -- and perhaps even economic support. In retrospect, it is difficult to see how such an American approach could have been effective except as part of a more coherent effort to persuade the leaders of the Ethiopian revolution that orientation to the Soviet Union was not in their country's ultimate interest -- the kind of sophisticated political initiative which the U.S. seemed incapable of undertaking during this period.

45. There are remarkable parallels between the Iran -- miscalculation, unexpected reallying of a country which seemed to be disintegrating, followed by better performance militarily of a country that had been dependent upon American equipment and U.S. concepts of military leadership. There are also interesting parallels -- and substantial differences -- between the Ethiopian and Iranian revolutions. I plan to devote a future essay to some comparisons.

46. The assertions of many writers who have chosen to believe otherwise to the contrary (Halliday & Molyneau, op. cit., give a distorted account of these events on pp. 223-231), no one in the Carter Administration promised military support to Somalia for anything other than defense of its own territory.

47. If the Derg had not leaped to break the U.S. military relationship in April 1977, it might have been able to persuade the U.S. to provide military support when the Somalis attacked. Here it might also be argued, however, that if the Carter Administration had had a larger view of U.S. strategic interests in the Horn/S.W. Asia/Indian Ocean region and less preoccupation

with the morality of arms transfers, some degree of flexibility might have permitted supply of badly needed spare parts for F-5E's, e.g., which had a direct and clear relationship to defense of the country against aggression. Though no commitments to Somalia were made at this time or in the subsequent two years, there was nevertheless a small group of short-sighted advocates of support for the Somalis in the Carter Administration. This group, suprisingly, included more men known as liberals than conservatives. The principal result of its influence at this time was to discourage creative strategic thinking about Ethiopia.

48. For additional detail see my "Communism and Ethiopia", loc. cit.

49. Though an ancient Muslim city with a distinct Semitic population and language of its own, Harar has a special emotional significance to Ethiopians, for it was the conquest of Harar by the Emperor Menelik in January 1887 that completed the process of restoring the Empire to what Ethiopians considered its ancient glory, for the Egyptians had occupied Harar and A large section of the adjacent coastal region in the previous decade. Ras Makonnen was governor of Harar when his son, the future Haile Selassie, was born in 1892. The site of Ethiopia's principal military academy, Harar played a political role in modern imperial Ethiopia out of all proportion to its population or economic importance. Loss of it to the Somalis would have discredited Mengistu's regime as unable to protect true Ethiopian

national interests. See "The Province of Harar" in my Ethiopian Journeys, London, 1977, pp. 187-212.

50. These figures are from ACDA, op. cit. in footnote Number 3 7, p. 99. Figures are not yet available for Russian military aid deliveries to Ethiopia in 1980, 1981, and 1982, but some have continued each year.

51. The phrase is from Nimrod Novik, On the Shores of Balcen-Mandeb -- Soviet Diplomacy and Regional Dynamics, University of Pennsylvania Foreign Policy Research Institute Monogram Number 26, Philadelphia, 1979.

52. I have experienced these complaints personally both as a government official and as a private researcher on many occasions since 1978. The Soviets have exploited these Ethiopian feelings -- whether genuine, naive or feigned, to encourage the conclusion that the United States is a country on which not a great deal of reliance can be placed over time. Nevertheless, the American visitor to Ethiopia is invariably currently impressed with the vast amount of residual pro-American feeling which remains in the country, much more so, unfortunately, than in Somalia, where the country's political and military misadventures, and the resulting refugee burden, have encouraged some degree of dour xenophobia.

53. See my "Communism and Etyhiopia", loc. cit., as well as a forthcoming article, "Ethiopia 1981" which chronicles some of my experiences and impressions during a visit in February 1981.

54. Russians in Ethiopia are currently estimated to total between 1,200 and 1,500. Proportionately this is a very small group compared to the size of the Russian advisory contingent in Egypt during the peak of the relationship with Nasser or in